

# ImagineFX

*Legend*

## FRANK FRAZETTA

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# Welcome... to ImagineFX



On 10 May, just two days before we were due to send this issue to press, the sad news filtered through that Frank Frazetta had passed away. Within minutes, thousands of artists from across the globe were posting glowing tributes to the artist on internet message boards and beyond.

He clearly – and rightly – held a special place in many hearts.

We knew that ImagineFX had to do something to celebrate the life of this great artist. Something beyond the brief 'Conan artist' tributes that had started to appear online and in print.

So, over the next six pages, we not only take a look at his illustrious career and discuss what makes his art so unique, we also ask fellow artists to share their stories and give insight into what Frank and his art means to them.

Undoubtedly, we'll revisit Frank's art and legacy again, as will you too, and that's why his work will live on. He's left us all something to remember him by and I can't think of a better way to celebrate Frank's life than to keep on creating art.

As editor of an art magazine, I'm all too aware of how subjective art is. One artist's genius is another artist's fool. But in Frank's case, he really was revered by all. Anyone who's studied art will have been asked the question by the tutor: 'What is Art?' The answer, at least in fantasy art terms is, and always will be, Frank Frazetta.

*Claire*

**Claire Howlett, Editor**  
[claire@imaginefx.com](mailto:claire@imaginefx.com)

Our special cover for  
subscribers this issue.

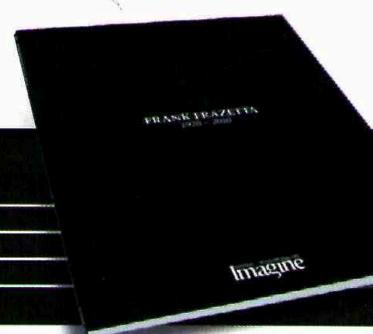
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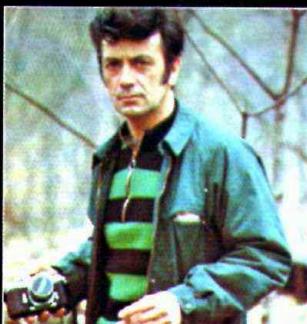
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## Frank Frazetta

*An icon, a legend and an inspiration – we pay tribute to  
**Frank Frazetta**, the godfather of fantasy art*

Frank Frazetta, the artist who defined the Golden Era of fantasy art and brought about new respect for the genre, sadly died of a stroke on Monday 10 May, in Fort Myers, Florida. He was 82.

To say Frank was an inspiration is to underestimate his impact, not just on art, but on popular culture in its widest sense. His visions of barbarians, fantastical creatures and the female form brought a new realism and boldness to fantasy art that cast an influence as far wide as books, comics, film and music. It's fair to say ImagineFX wouldn't exist without Frank Frazetta.

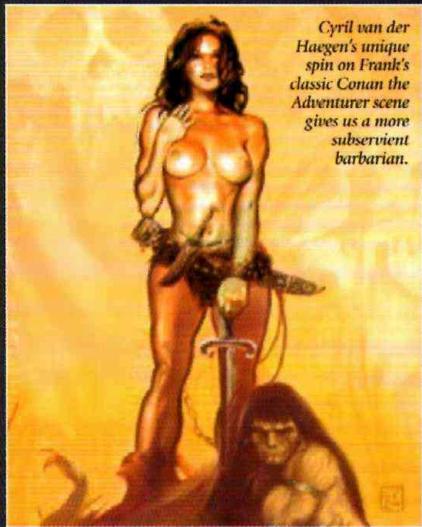
The man himself was more humble. Of his career and his art he told ImagineFX in 2008, back in issue 28, that, "I'm not pretending I'm a great painter. I don't think I am. What I think I'll be remembered for is my imagination, for my sense of drama, and for not being afraid to take a chance."

### FEEL THE SCENE

From the outset, Frank had a loose, yet bold and dramatic style. His images came to life though his use of aggressive brush strokes and empathy for the subject. In 2008 he ➤



**The Silver Warrior**  
*painted in 1972*



## FRANK AT 80

In 2008, ImagineFX celebrated Frank Frazetta's 80th birthday with the world's art community. And what a party it was...

We partnered with 80 artists, including Rodney Matthews, Daniel Dociu and Raymond Swanland, and asked them to create their own take on a Frank Frazetta scene. The result was a collection of exceptional illustrations, in a variety of styles and media. It proved that Frank's influence spreads to every corner of modern fantasy art, from concept artists to book illustrators and matte painters.

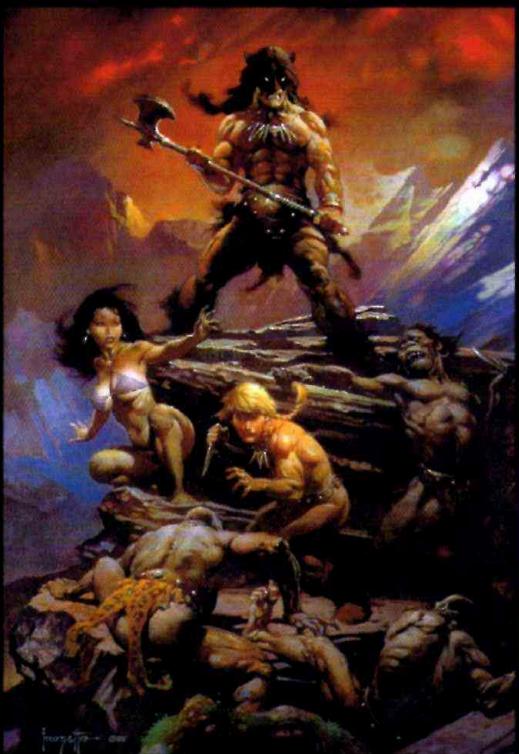


Daniel Dociu puts a digital spin on a classic Frazetta character and re-imagines Death Dealer in his own style.



*Dark Kingdom*, painted in 1976, is typical of Frank's masterful use of composition and contrasting light, that drags you towards his warrior's pose.

“What I think I'll be remembered for is my imagination, for my sense of drama, and for not being afraid to take a chance” **FRANK FRAZETTA**



*The 1983 movie Fire and Ice was pure Frazetta in motion. Frank created the characters and world, drafted the script and painted this image, the movie's promotional poster.*

► told us, "I never have a solid image in my head before I start drawing, just a certain feeling about it. On very rare occasions I see the images very clearly once I start sketching, but they're usually just very simple scenes."

One such scene was the image that truly launched Frank's career. In 1965, after years working in comics, painting covers for the jungle adventure *Thun'da*, *Dan Brand* and *Buck Rogers*, Frank was offered a contract to paint the cover of Robert E. Howard's *Conan The Adventurer*. The cover featured a dark, brooding barbarian, standing on a heaped pile of dead bodies, a naked slave girl wrapped around his legs and the glow of a burning village crowning the frame. It was visceral, iconic and exploded the preconception of what fantasy art should be.

"Frank Frazetta was the undisputed daddy of heroic fantasy art, an inspiration to artists across the globe," says Simon Brewer, recalling his love of the artist's work and that famous cover. "His high-impact style

 is much copied yet rarely replicated, such was his skill in communicating energy, dynamism

and classic fantasy mood. Frank may have passed on but his legacy will long continue."

It's all the more impressive when you dig deeper into Frank's working process. Paintings such as that first Conan cover, or indeed his later work on *Tarzan* and *John Carter of Mars*, began life from an emotional source. "I don't see detail, just a certain atmosphere," he once told us. "That it's warm or cold, that's it's terrible or eerie. I see something, but nothing distinct."

It's that emotional connection, above all, that was Frank's gift. He qualified his feelings for an image through bold strokes, a vibrant colour palette and imaginative character design that seemed to grow from the paint. The impact of the first Conan cover was equally emotional. Frank soared to the top of the industry. Publishers craved both him and anything to do with Robert E. Howard. Thanks to Frank's powerful illustrations of warriors and sexualised savagery, long-forgotten pulp characters

became contemporary bestsellers. With them, Frank became one of the most influential illustrators of the 20th century.

"When you're struck by the work of an artist, the day remains engraved in your

 psyche," reflects John Howe. "I may well have grown up and now be working in the profession I hoped I might, but somewhere, I'll always be 14, visiting every used paperback shop within cycling distance, searching for book covers by Frank Frazetta. Buried treasure couldn't have lured or enchanted me more." Such was Frank's impact, you have to wonder: did anyone ever read Conan and his cabal? John recalls the dilemma fondly. "I made horrible copies of them [the illustrations] all in oil pastel. Perhaps I even read some of the books behind those coveted covers. If halcyon days can have a face and a name, it would be Frazetta's."

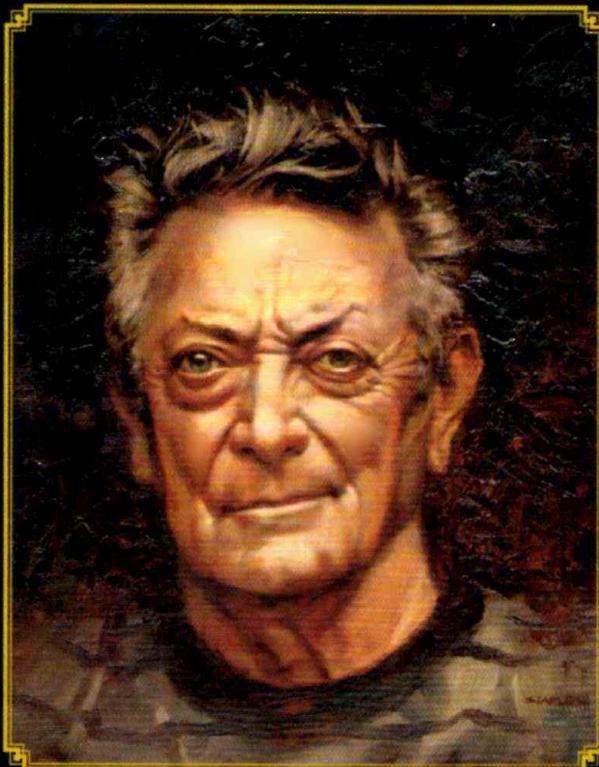
### HARD GRAFT

The Conan cover was the impetus for Frank's most productive period. Between 1965 and 1973, Frank produced most of his more famous illustrations, including Cat Girl, Silver Warrior and the iconic Death Dealer. Frank's success (Conan The Adventurer sold 10 million copies) spawned imitators, and soon barbarians and buxom women were appearing on many book sleeves. Frank stayed ahead of the pack by working at a frenzied pace. He once completed three cover illustrations for Ace Books in two days.

Frank's workrate was again linked to his process. He'd often regarded himself as painting "by instinct" and would "draw almost unconsciously", letting his hand wander the canvas, building shapes and masses. As he told us, "It's like my mind is one place and my hand is another... somehow it all starts to come together".

Taking this at face value would be to deny Frank's gift for composition. Every image is built from an energetic focal point, shapes interact and the pyramid structure holds his paintings together. When working on an image, Frank would look for interesting patterns and work with loose blobs of colour to visualise spaces and shapes, achieving balance between blobs and building a hierarchy of importance and positioning. To prevent an image looking too forced, he occasionally introduced a new element, forcing it into the composition to sweep across the hierarchy and set the mind racing.

"Once I'm happy with the composition, I'll work on the forward figures first: they're



“When I finally bought my first Frazetta book when I was 24, I honestly couldn't believe what I was seeing. It wasn't necessarily his painting technique. Frankly I felt there are some who could paint technically just as well, but it was the power and energy that hit me like a lightning bolt! His subjects were alive on the page, his women made of real flesh, his people moved... this was not the fantasy art I was expecting. Everything he touched, worked.”

GREG STAPLES



In the 1950s, Frank worked under the guidance of Ralph Mayo on Thun'Da, the only comic he drew cover to cover.

Many young fantasy artists got their first taste for Frank from his work on Eerie and Creepy magazines.



the most important," said Frank when he spoke to ImagineFX for his 80th birthday celebration. "Above all, there's always an interaction of shapes that provides a feeling of stillness. I think that's why people react to my art, even if they can't figure out why the hell they're reacting to it. It's not posed and fake."

Part of Frank's inspiration to artists was his devotion to learning the craft. While he was a gifted child, having started drawing at the age three and enrolled in the Michele Falanga's Brooklyn Academy of Fine Arts when he was eight, he was instinctive, not technical. Commenting in the 2003 documentary *Frazetta: Painting With Fire*, he said, "When I was in school with Falanga, the emphasis was on feeling, not on the nuts and bolts." When working in comics in the late 1940s and 1950s, Frank was mentored by Ralph Mayo. "When Ralph took over, he pulled me aside and said, 'Frank, your stuff is great, but you need to learn some anatomy.' I really didn't understand what he meant by anatomy." That night he went home and studied an anatomy book Ralph had lent him, and in typically frenzied fashion, he began on page one and redrew the entire human body from the skeleton up.

### SUPERSTAR SKETCHER

It's these stories that help define Frank as a legendary artists' artist. He worked hard at his craft, and was himself inspired by other artists, such as Howard Pyle and NC Wyeth, picking up on their use of light to punctuate the darker brooding colours of a scene. He turned those influences into his own style, built on instinct, imagination and hard work. Looking back at Frank's early work, his signifying influences, references and details can be seen no matter what the subject. The stylised foliage, the impression of space, the obsession with powerful beasts such as panthers and wolves, and of course, no matter what the scenario, Frazetta's women were unclothed, buxom and beautiful. Robert E. Howard's Conan was funnelled through Frazetta's vision, not the other way around. In doing so, he stepped over the line that separates a jobbing illustrator from an artist.

"Frazetta revitalised the field of fantasy art with a fresh sense of the iconic image, drawn from his own vivid feeling for drama and conflict," says James Gurney as he recalls what impressed him about Frank's work. "His moon maidens, thundering dragons and sword-wielding barbarians took on a

# FRANK FRAZETTA

► powerful life of their own, which shaped the imagination of many artists working today, me included."

## LICENSING BREAKTHROUGH

Frank forged a new kind of relationship between an artist and a client. His policy of retaining original works and licensing his art, coupled with his wife Ellie setting up a poster business to sell Frank's work, created a business model that has empowered artists to this day. Frank was a 'success', the professional illustrator admired by his peers, respected by his clients and idolised by his fans. As Liam Sharp says, "Frazetta gave fantasy art credibility – and its first true superstar."

Frank's status in the 1970s and the impact of his art on popular culture exploded in the 1980s, including work on album covers, T-shirts and films, culminating in the movie *Fire and Ice*. While previous films such as John Milius's *Conan The Barbarian* drew inspiration from Frank for their art direction, *Fire and Ice* was more personal. Long-time friend and animator Ralph Bakshi, fresh from work on *Lord of the Rings* and *Wizards*, asked Frank to collaborate on the movie. Working closely with Ralph, Frank designed the characters, the world and even sat in on the casting and live-action filming sessions.

"I had the privilege of working as a background painter on *Fire and Ice*," says James Gurney as he remembers time spent with Frank at his studio. "We always tried to get Frank to give the studio a class on figure drawing and composition, but he never did, probably because much of what he did was intuitive. That intuition, combined with a fierce confidence in the power of pure imagination, made his images unforgettable and truly immortal."

After a disappointing reception of *Fire and Ice*, Frank returned to his studio. During the 1980s and 1990s, he continued to paint, creating art for album covers and posters, as well as developing his own themes; he painted new versions of *Death Dealer* and *Cat Woman*. Celebrity fans courted him, and included Steven Spielberg, George Lucas and Arnold Schwarzenegger. His value soared and even unfinished sketches would sell for thousands of dollars. Despite this, Frank refused to sell many of his original paintings. Instead, he opened the Frazetta Museum in East Stroudsburg so that they could be enjoyed by the public.

In the 2003 documentary, Frank spoke about the need to create the museum. "It was all Ellie's idea. We were always



► I'm constantly asked how I learned to paint. My standard answer is, I taught myself. In reality, I didn't. Frank Frazetta taught me how to paint. I can pinpoint the exact moment when Frank changed my life. It was the day I picked up that copy of *Conan the Conqueror* from the drugstore paperback rack as a child in Hawaii. It was then that I knew what I wanted to be. I literally copied his paintings to teach myself how to paint. Eventually, he taught me that I couldn't be him – I needed to be my own artist. ■

DAVE DORMAN



Bob Eggleton and the late Ron Walotsky pictured with Frank in 1997.



Cat Girl II, painted in 1990, was a reworking of his 1984 original and continued Frank's love affair with the female form and powerful, big cats.

getting calls from the fans asking if they could come see the originals. The best we had done through the years was to have some exhibits at various conventions, but that got to be a hassle. We did the museum for all the people who have had fun with my art over the years. It wasn't for profit – if I wanted to make money I would've sold the originals. My joy is in showing the work."

## LATE IN LIFE

Behind the scenes, Frank's health was worsening but, as Bob Eggleton recalls, it

didn't prevent him commanding an audience or painting. "When I met him in 1997, you felt his presence when he entered the room," says Bob. Frank was recovering from a stroke at the time. It had left his drawing hand paralysed, but he had taught himself to draw with his other hand. "He was in great spirits and a very kind man to meet. However, when fellow artist, the late Ron Walotsky and myself met him, and had our picture taken with him, it was such an intimidating experience for us both. Ron aptly titled the photo 'Frank Frazetta and Two Guys'. We'll miss Frank, but his work has left a permanent imprint on not just fantasy art, but the art world as a whole."

In 2008, the cover illustration for Burroughs' *Escape on Venus* sold for \$251,000. In 2009, the original *Conan the Conqueror* painting was sold privately for \$1 million. Up until that point, Frank had resolutely refused to sell any of his original *Conan* illustrations, and it became a contentious issue, which for a time divided the Frazetta family. To this day, it's unclear how much Frank knew of the sale.

It's a testament to Frank's legacy that such unseemly squabbles over his collection haven't harmed his reputation. His impact stretches further than a valuation could ever reach. As Brom recalls, "I was six years old when I saw my first Frazetta cover. The impact was so great that I can still recall the adrenaline rush. I've spent my life since then trying to capture an ounce of the life and power of his works. My greatest testament to Frank, is the better I become as an artist, the better his art gets."

Frank was a unique talent. He bridged the gap between the traditions of the Golden Age masters and artists of the modern era. As artists of all calibre line up to pay tribute, one thing is clear, Frank Frazetta will live on his paintings and in the brush strokes of countless fans and artists, all aspiring to follow in his footsteps. ■



The Death Dealer  
painted in 1973

©1973

frayet

# ImagineFX

# Contents

## FXPosé

12 Reader FXPosé  
62 Traditional FXPosé

## ImagineNation

20 News  
28 Planet of the Arts  
30 Forum winners  
32 Letters  
38 Artist Q&A

## Features

4 Frank Frazetta  
A tribute to the legendary godfather of fantasy art.

46 The rise of manga  
We explore the history of the manga phenomenon.

56 Sketchbook  
A peek inside the world of Véronique Meignaud.

60 Development sheet  
Fredrik Dahl Tyskerud shows us his steamy creations.

112 Studio profile  
We visit Canadian studio UDON on its 10th birthday.

## Reviews

### 102 Digital art hardware

The new Wacom Cintiq 21UX.

### 104 Software

Animate 2, Mystical Tint Tone Color 2.0, Colors! and Filter Forge 2.0.

### 107 Books

### 109 Anime

### 110 Games

## Regulars

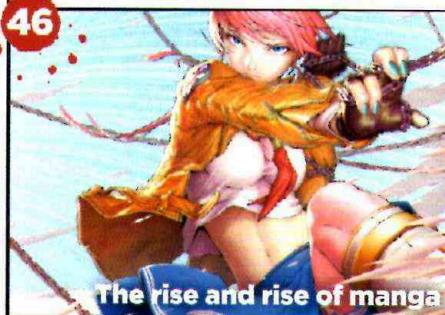
3 Editor's letter  
34 Subscribe today  
55 Back issues  
89 Subscribe US  
94 Next month  
114 DVD contents

4



The art community pays tribute to the late, great Frank Frazetta

46



The rise and rise of manga

42



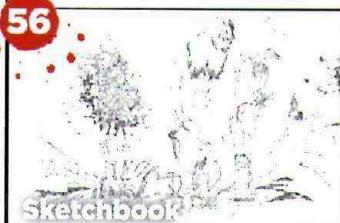
Q&A: Attitude

112



Studio profile

56



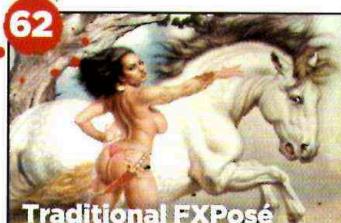
Sketchbook

109



The Sky Crawlers

62



Traditional FXPosé

Reader  
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THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



See page 12 for the best new art ➔

40



Q&A: Fireworks

FANTASY & SCIENCE-FICTION DIGITAL ART

# ImagineFX

## Workshops

Advice and techniques from pro artists...



### 68 Get under the skin of manga

Draw authentic manga characters with Saejin Oh.



### 74 Dynamic manga

Chester Ocampo explains how he created this month's cover image.



### 76 Learn the secrets of Japanese art

Sinad Jaruwartjanapat explains his art style.



### 80 Make the unusual look natural

Simon Dominic explains ArtRage's brush engine.



### 84 Paint an intense monster portrait

Create a creature grounded in reality with Dave Rapoza.



### 90 Production design for games

Christian Bravery shows you how it's done.



### 96 Capture the heat of the moment

Evoke a fantasy location's mood with Daarken.

## Artist Q&A

### 38 This month's Q&A topics...

Make human faces look alien, paint splashing water, create realistic multi-limbed creatures and make your own watercolour brushes in Photoshop. Plus paint windows that glisten in the sun and more!



96

68

80

84

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**ImagineFX**  
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Turn to page 114 for more...

## ON YOUR DVD

This month's essential art resources...

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Free human cougar worth \$19.99.

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Learn from the best artists around.



# Reader FXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



## Arnaud Valette

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Although he worked as a concept artist and then senior texture artist for such films as *Angels & Demons* and *Clash of the Titans*, Arnaud says that outside office hours he's an illustrator. "I paint shapes, characters, creatures and environments, totally dependant on my feelings, visions and Photoshop." At the moment Arnaud's working on a personal project, which he describes as "an omnibus that'll be part of an exhibition".

**1 THE RED SEAWEED** "This piece is part of a personal omnibus. I like this picture - it's mainly just two colours, but with a lots of paint work."

**2 THE BLUE PANTS** "This one will be part of the same book as The Red Seaweed - those two are really my personal artworks. They're not concept or simple illustrations, but more about personal introspection."

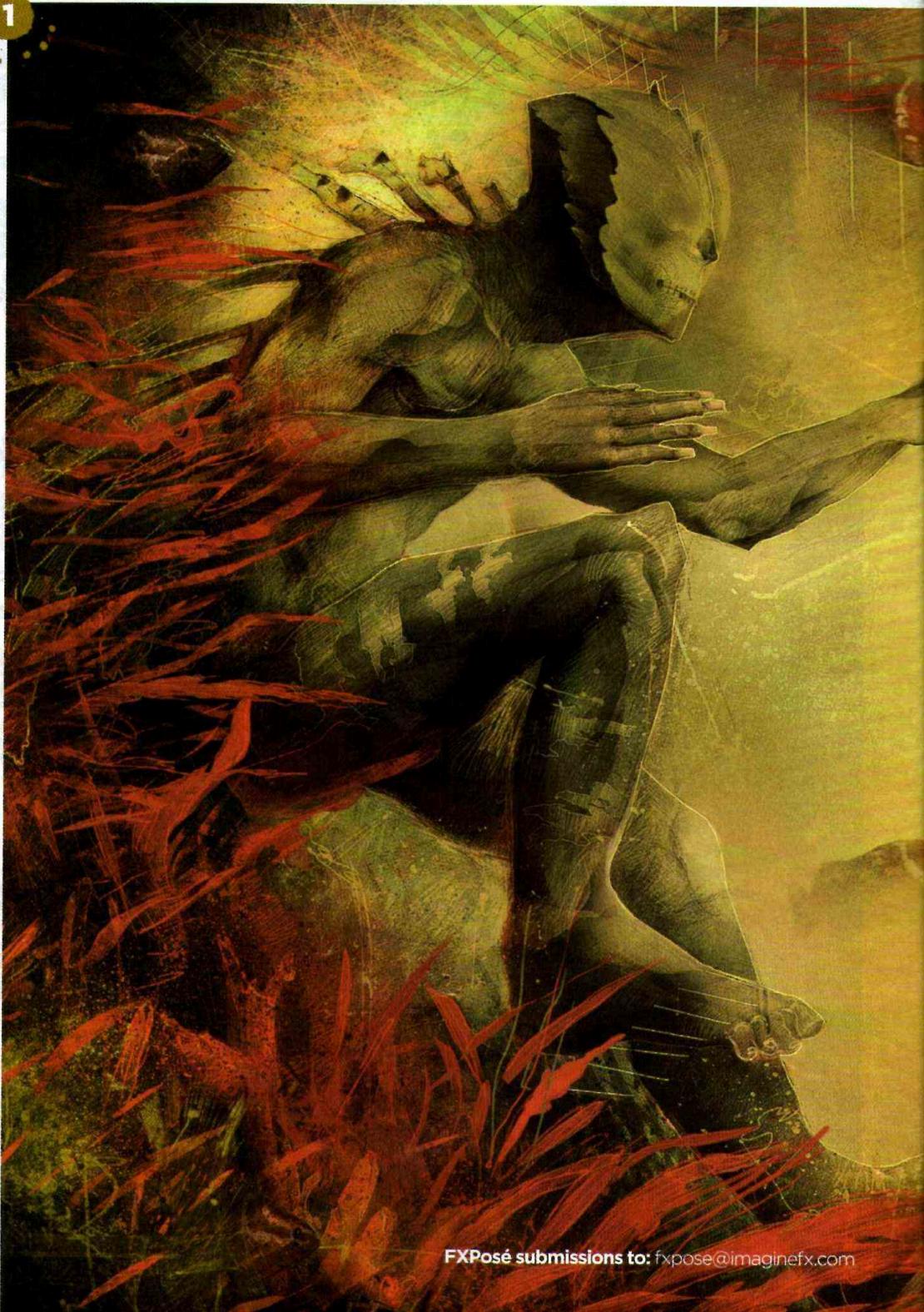
**3 MAGDALENA** "This one shows my love for tribal civilisations. I like how the dress, the textures and those strange creatures can blend together and inspire lots of imagination."



## ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Arnaud - you've won copies of *Exotique 5* and *Character Modeling 3*. To find out more about these two indispensable art resources, go to [www.ballisticpublishing.com](http://www.ballisticpublishing.com).

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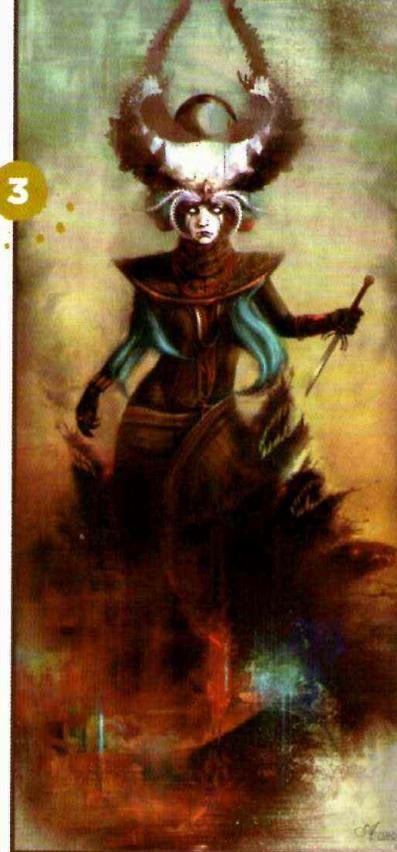


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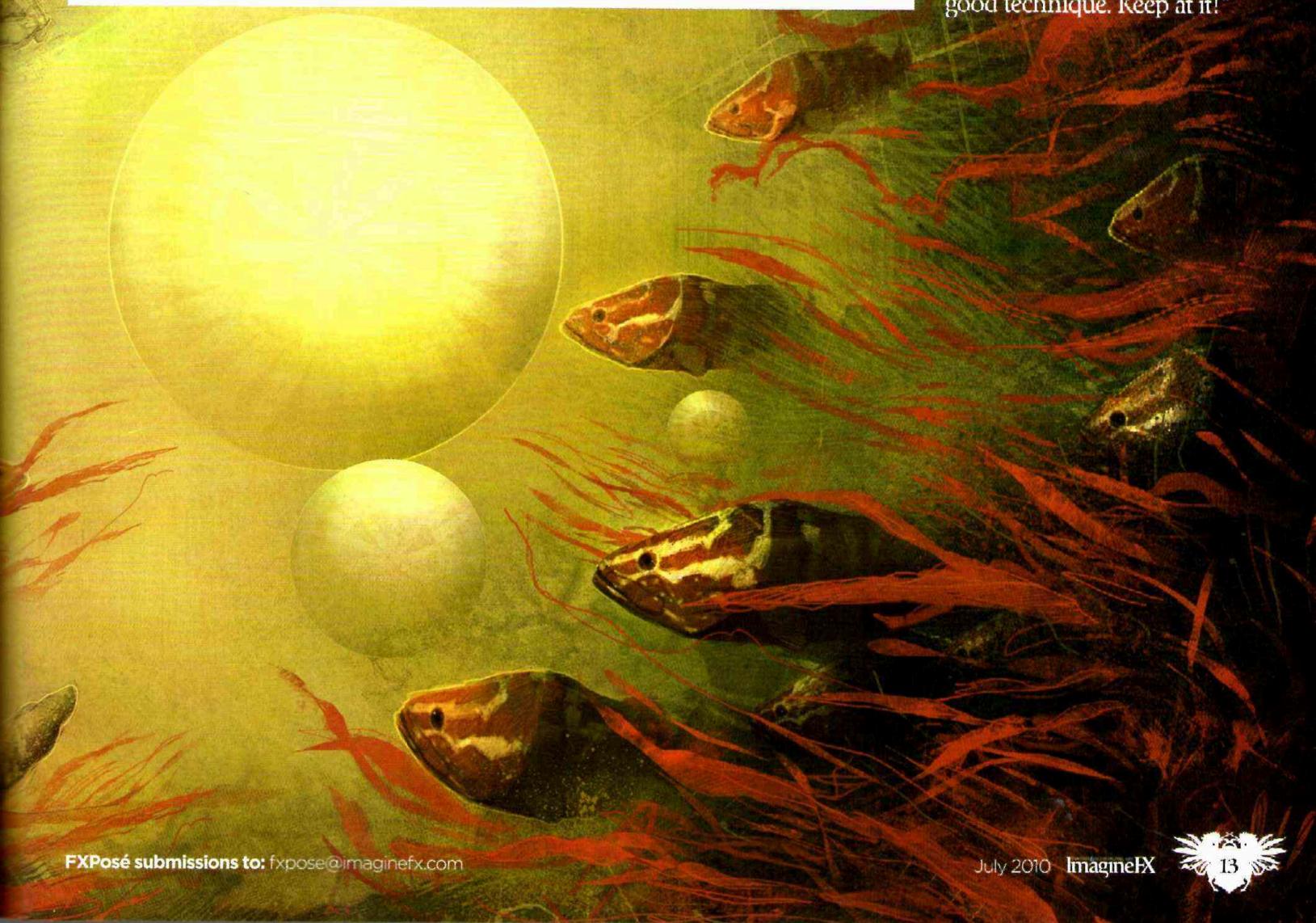


## *Artist crit*

**Fantasy master Justin Sweet is impressed...**



"Nice work Arnaud! The piece titled 'The Blue Pants' is my favourite. It shows a lot of creativity and is well executed. Your work shows plenty of imagination, a nice sense of design and good technique. Keep at it!"



1



2



## David Demaret

LOCATION: France

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



With an overriding passion for videogames, David only started to produce game art last year, when his hidden love for illustration came through. "For the time being I'm working as art director at Punchers Impact, a new game studio in Paris," he says, "but I'm creating illustrations whenever I get the chance."

### 1 THE BLACK MOON CEREMONY

"Every 127 years the black moon appears. This is the signal for this Dark Cult to gather at a secret tower and conduct an unknown ceremony that will resurrect dead warriors, creating a merciless and invincible army."

### 2 AFTER THE GIANTS' WAR

"Once there were giants walking on this world, fighting each other. Now, those almost indestructible shells are the foundations of new cities."

1



**Jason Martin**

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**EMAIL:** [jason@conceptcreature.com](mailto:jason@conceptcreature.com)  
**SOFTWARE:** Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Painter, Flash and 3ds Max



"I knew the basics of digital art," says Jason, who's a senior concept artist at a gaming company. "But it wasn't until I got two clients' deadlines mixed up and I realised I had one evening to knock out four illustrations that I really learnt about it." It was the first time Jason had to work in digital. "And I never went back to painting traditionally," he adds.

**1 SENSEI** "I did this for a show in Gainesville called Big Trouble in Little Gainesville. I gotta give props to the owner of the boutique for trying to run a niche art store in that town."

**2 SEERS GLASS** "I worked at a children's publishing company, and the boss's kids loved to talk to me, because I was always drawing cartoons. Their seven-year-old child drew all these psychedelic eyes on sticky tabs and decorated my cubicle with them. After a few weeks of these wild-looking eyes staring at me, inspiration hit."

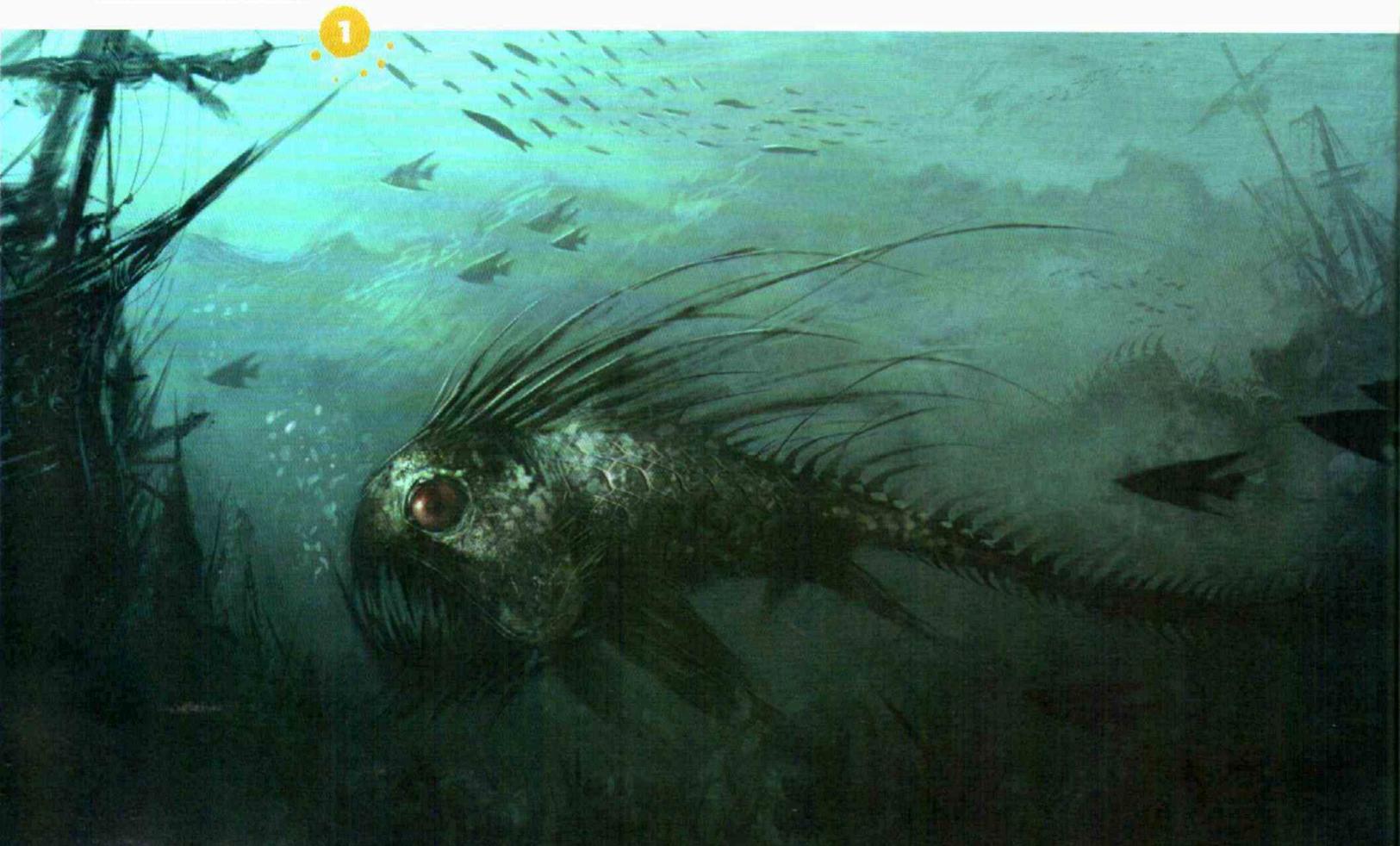
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### IMAGINEFX CRIT

"Jason's work is full of colour and character, I love it! Glad to see he's decided to go digital – it means he can create more of his unique visions in double-quick time!"

**Ian Dean,**  
Deputy Editor



 **Lawrence Jone Leung**

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SOFTWARE: Painter, Photoshop



As a child, Lawrence took a novel approach to art. "I drew on the backs of children's books and tried to copy whatever was on television at the time." With college came the move towards concept art, fantasy and science fiction illustration. "I've done commissioned work based in New York, but hope to do gaming and film work for a living one day."

**1 LEGEND FISH** "I had the idea of creating an urban myth, where pirates at sea have died trying to locate this legendary sea creature. None have lived to tell the tale of the monster."

**2 PETS AND PREY** "We domesticate dogs and cats, and kill other species of animals for food and I was intrigued by playing with this dynamic. I created an alien being, some sort of higher life form, killing us as prey and having glowing insects as pets."



1



**David Neaves**

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



David is a self-taught artist who stopped working in traditional media when running his own business took over all his spare time. "Originally I only really used Photoshop with my photography," he says, "but in 2006 I bought my first copy of ImagineFX and I've been hooked ever since."

**1 RETRIBUTION** "This is like Mad Max but with women in charge. With the end of civilisation females take over and wreak havoc on man for all his stupidity."

**2 BENZAI - TEN** "This is the Japanese goddess of love, the arts and poetry. I enjoyed painting this picture as it was done in a more relaxed way with larger and more textured brushes than is usual for me."

**IMAGINEFX CRIT**

 "Two strikingly different offerings here from David. One image is dynamic, with an alluring air of menace and the other is gentle, calming and ethereal. Both great artworks."

Claire Howlett,  
Editor

2



**1 Ezhil Vendan**

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EMAIL: [ezhil@hotmail.com](mailto:ezhil@hotmail.com)

SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Maya



Ezhil knows all too well that sometimes it takes time to realise your true calling. Having studied medicine and then practised as a dentist for a couple of years, he then switched profession and became a full-time computer graphic artist, because of his passion for art and animation. "I now work as a senior artist for Traveller's Tales, a UK game developer which has made games such as the Lego Indiana Jones and Lego Star Wars," says Ezhil.

1



**1 DARK PET** "A pen and ink black and white sketch was scanned in and coloured using Photoshop. A lot of non-pigment colours have been used, resulting in a more modern-looking palette of colours."

**2 ENTANGLED** "For this piece, I rendered the image with a quick lighting setup in Maya. The 3D rendered output carried more complex light information and formed the second layer in the Photoshop image. I worked several layers manually on top of these to achieve the final image."

**3 ZEE ZEE** "Zeezee-Ba is a sorcerer who lives in isolation in his island fortress. The walls of his chamber are the fossilised remains of ancient creatures that form most of the substance of this cavern. He plots to overthrow the king of Bagdad, with the aid of his magical powers and some beasts under his command."

2



3



## SEND US YOUR ARTWORK!

Want to see your digital art grace these very pages? Send your work to us, along with an explanation of your techniques, the title of each piece of art, a photo of yourself and your contact details. Images should be sent as 300dpi JPEG files, on CD or DVD. All artwork is submitted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish, both in print and electronically.

You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them. [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com)

### SEND YOUR ARTWORK TO:

**FXPosé**  
ImagineFX  
30 Monmouth Street  
Bath, BA1 2BW  
UK

## IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Ezhil's Entangled is a nice example of blending to conceal the digital in digital art. The loose rendering and washes remove the artificial origins of the image, leaving us with a subtle yet dramatic scene."

**Paul Tysall,**  
Art Editor

# What's your idea of manga?

**Comics** Artists and fans of manga will at least agree on one thing: it's about telling stories

**Say manga and many people will think of big hair, oversized eyes and speed-lines.**

**Others might evoke an abundance of speech bubbles, the technique of super-deformed parody or some kick-ass mecha.**

It's also likely that a huge range of the styles and techniques in Japanese comics won't get a look-in, because many rely on reductive notions of what manga means - including companies looking for a catchy marketing tool. The noun thus morphs into an adjective, a



Manga? Here's Emma's take on the princes in the tower. "I have an obsession with Richard III's story."

catch-all for comic art that ticks one or two of the stylistic boxes.



It's safe to say not all are happy with this. "Manga is just the Japanese word for comic," says artist and manga enthusiast Steve Kyte. "It's not the name of a certain style."

Such misunderstandings can be both inaccurate and problematic. "The actual range of styles seen in manga, anime and Japanese illustration are vast," says

Filipino artist Elmer Damaso. "It's mad to limit it to the big-eyed cuteness most people see as manga."

Some find this generalisation offensive. "It's insulting to Japanese manga artists to imply that it's a style rather than an industry," says English comic artist Emma Vieceli. "Compare comics like Death Note and Tekkonkinkreet and you'll see two different styles of art. To imply that they fall into one stylistic category is wrong."



Steve Kyte's poster art for A-KON 12.

This is one of Emma's illustrations: "To imply that all manga falls into one stylistic category is just wrong."

## Manga at a glance

Five things that set manga apart from the rest of the comic world

### Shady manga

Because a lot of manga is in black and white, you can find more ways to convey three dimensions, such as elaborate crosshatching and the use of varying tones.

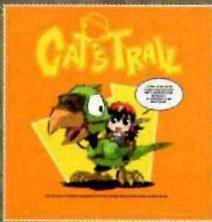


### Size matters

With Japanese comics usually the size of phone books, there's more time for stories to unfold, which can get lost in translation when condensed for Western audiences.

### Super deformed

Linked to Chibi (small people) manga, super deformed is a caricature style that compresses characters' bodies into manic parodies to create comic moments.



### Self-published

When people want non-mainstream, there's Dōjinshi - self-published manga. There are even conventions dedicated to these titles, like the mammoth Comiket.



## ANNIVERSARY TOME

Canadian studio UDON, famous for its work on the Street Fighter game, has produced a book of brand new art to celebrate its 10th birthday.  
Page 23



## SEEKING PERFECTION

Tea-loving illustrator Warren Louw explains why his workspace is the ideal creative environment, and what he uses his Yamashita girl figures for.  
Page 24



## FINAL WHISTLE

Not entered our great fantasy World Cup competition yet? There's still time to submit your players, but hurry – the closing date is approaching!  
Page 26



Here's a Pokémon cover that Jeffrey 'Chamba' Cruz created in 2009.

### Myriad manga

Whoever you are, there's manga that's marketed for you. The wealth of flavours includes Shoujo for girls (such as Sanri Yoko's *B Gata H Kei*), Shonen for boys, Josei for women, and Seinen for men, not to mention the sexually explicit *Hentai*.



## INDUSTRY INSIGHT

### JEFFREY CRUZ

*On how one word can distract from a wide world of storytelling*

#### Why do you like manga?

It's the whole visual storytelling aspect, the craft behind it, the concepts conveyed and the ways a story can be told sequentially.

#### Do you think using the word to describe a style is problematic?

Some use the word manga to describe art that looks like it came from Japan, but manga is just a Japanese word for comic – it's all comics to me. Some artists will take offence at those terms being thrown around lightly, but I feel it depends on each individual.

#### Some critics see manga as a limited or restricted artform...

I believe those who turn their nose up are simply not as open minded. I'm not saying what they're doing is wrong, but it's a shame they exclude manga from their reading – they may find stories they love.

#### How do you become a successful manga artist?

Knowing comic history could help, but the more important thing is to know about the art of storytelling.

#### Have you come across snobbery involved with who gets called what in manga?

Oh yeah, totally. You hear some folks want to be referred to as a mangaka even though they live in America, just like some want their work referred to as a graphic novel rather than comic. I find it funny. It's all comics, it's all sequential art, and it's all storytelling.



Artist Jeffrey 'Chamba' Cruz loves manga and comics, and recently joined the UDON studio in Canada.

[www.udonentertainment.com](http://www.udonentertainment.com)

Continued from previous page...



This is Filipino comic artist Elmer Damaso's homage to Transformers and Gundam Girls.

Yet this common misuse of the word can't just be attributed to a malevolent Western public peddling lazy terminology. Most people outside Japan have only seen a small proportion of manga. While the country exports sci-fi and fantasy manga, a lot remains within Japan, such as that on sports and games.

However, this notion of a largely insular industry is at odds with the ongoing dialogue between mangakas (manga creators) and the rest of the comic-making world. From manga legend Osamu Tezuka being inspired by Betty Boop's big eyes, to manga that has more in common with US indie comics than popular manga such as Taniguchi Jiro's *Distant Neighborhood*, and the increasing number of international co-productions, it's clear manga didn't spring into being as a fully formed artform.

Some prefer to bypass the

 word altogether. "I'm careful not to refer to myself as a manga artist," says Emma. "Thanks to this general understanding of manga, I find myself marked as 'not manga enough' by group A and 'too manga' by group B.

"I'm interested in telling stories, and that's something that unites comic artists the world over."



## Winning concept

**Highly evolved** We speak to the winner of the Evolve3D Hunter competition



Having entered a set of five images, Shaun Keenan has won first place in the concept art section of the ImagineFX-sponsored Evolve3D Hunter Challenge.

As well as software and a year's subscription to ImagineFX, Shaun will get a VIP ticket to the second annual EvolveCG conference, where his work will be on display. "This is huge for me as a young artist starting out in the industry and will be invaluable in helping me make new contacts and relationships with professionals," he says.

Inspiration for the image came from an unlikely source. "I thought of how cowboys take down steers by the horns in rodeos and how dynamic and overtly aggressive it is," he reveals. "That image stewed in my head, and then a little rodent savagely attacking a hawk became the main character."

The judges declared that his winning piece was a "really nice play of visual contrast of a deadly, wise hunter in a tiny mouse's body". You can see more of Shaun's art at [www.shaunkeenan.com](http://www.shaunkeenan.com).

## Fantasy talk Explaining the inexplicable

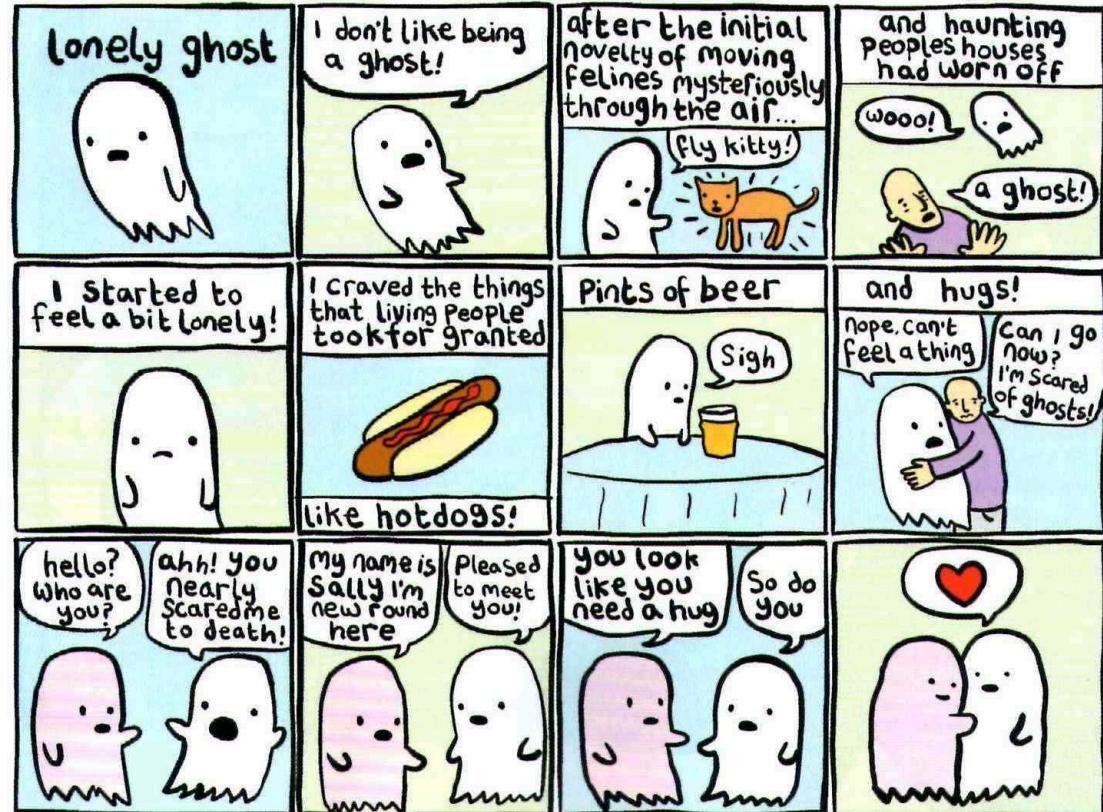
**"A great art director once said to me that a good character design is one that an eight year old can draw after seeing it only once."**

*Christian Bravery reveals who his studio will be aiming its recruitment drive at... See page 90*



## Life Is Humiliation

by Matt Boyce





The Canadian-based company's first comic book offering was Street Fighter in September 2003.

## What a difference a decade makes

**UDON doodles** To mark its 10th anniversary, the Canadian studio is releasing a new art book featuring fresh work from its finest artists

**It started life as a loose collective of artists in Canada, but this summer UDON celebrates its 10th year of creating comics by publishing the art book *Vent*.**

The anthology collects new illustrations, stories and tutorials from many of the artists who have worked for UDON over the decade, including mainstays such as Arnold Tsang, Omar Dogan and Jeffrey 'Chamba' Cruz.

For the book's editor Matt Moylan, the secret to UDON's success is clear. "So many small publishers last only a few years," he says, "so

I think UDON having made it to the 10-year mark is a testament to the quality and hard work of our artists and staff."

Best known for its affiliation with Street Fighter game developer Capcom, the Canadian company is also responsible for a number of comics, art books and high-profile collaborations with companies such as Marvel and Warner Brothers.

According to Matt, UDON has benefited from picking artists that strive to be the best. "I've been with the company five years," he says, "and it's been great to see each newcomer push to produce their best work."



Artist Omar Dogan agrees.

"I would say that if you're professional and serious about getting ahead, then an artist can do well at UDON."

Turn to page 112 where we go behind the scenes at the Ontario-based studio.

As well as being famous for its game concept art, UDON has released English versions of Japanese manga, as well as art books like the new *Vent*.





deviantART

## +deviantWATCH

Here are some of the many gems we found on the pages of deviantART...



### Kirk Quilaquil

[ninjatic.deviantart.com](http://ninjatic.deviantart.com)

This British Filipino artist has wired his deviantART page with an exuberant, positivist stance on life. Whether it's manga-styled takes on popular fantasy characters or warrior creations of his own, every image is imbued with this 21-year-old's fun-loving character.



### Gonzalo Ordóñez Arias

[genzoman.deviantart.com](http://genzoman.deviantart.com)

Greek mythology, Mexican revolutionaries and fantasy depictions of folk songs sit side by side here, with Gonzalo's acute eye for action infusing everything. There's also World of Warcraft art and loads more commissioned work shown off.



### Maria Trepalina

[ketka.deviantart.com](http://ketka.deviantart.com)

Maria has a wonderful knack of knowing when to blend bold colours together and when to keep illustrations stripped down to their basics. Whether they're caricature self-portraits, fan art epics or commissioned poster art, her results are always striking and brimming with character.



## Artist in Residence Warren Louw



**Creative power** The beauty-making machine takes us through his meticulously thought-out set-up

Welcome to my base of operations. This is where a huge deal of my time has been spent engineering beauty, the way I see it. Since most of my current life is spent at this desk, I decided I'd set it up in a way that would harmonise best with who I am.

I'm a bit of a perfectionist fuelled by a somewhat severe case of OCD, so my environment needs to be in order, on my terms. When that's the case, I feel like the data in my mind is better filed, giving me more mental bandwidth to focus in a greater capacity.

I work on a 24-inch iMac and an A4 Wacom Intuos 3, both of which are a pleasure to use. I also have two lamps on

either side of me, because I don't enjoy working in darkness. Luckily, my desk is in a corner area of my lounge where no harsh light floods in to cause hazardous reflections all over my screen, which would be equally bad. In addition, I have two of my magazine covers framed on either side of the computer to remind me that whatever I'm doing is actually working, which can be rather comforting.

As you can see to the left, I'm a bit of a spiritual chap with my crystals, Himalayan rock salt lamp, Tibetan singing bowl, incense burners and so on.

I also have to have great sound around me while I work, so I got myself a pair of



Harman Kardon Soundsticks, and some Sennheiser headphones too.

To the right of my screen, I've got two lovely girls from Shunya Yamashita, a mini desk fan (mounted on the base of the lamp) and other various pieces of hardware.

I do love my tea, so I always keep a full pot next to me when making my way through those long nights. Lastly, behind my screen is a bookcase that covers the entire wall, which contains a multitude of titles.

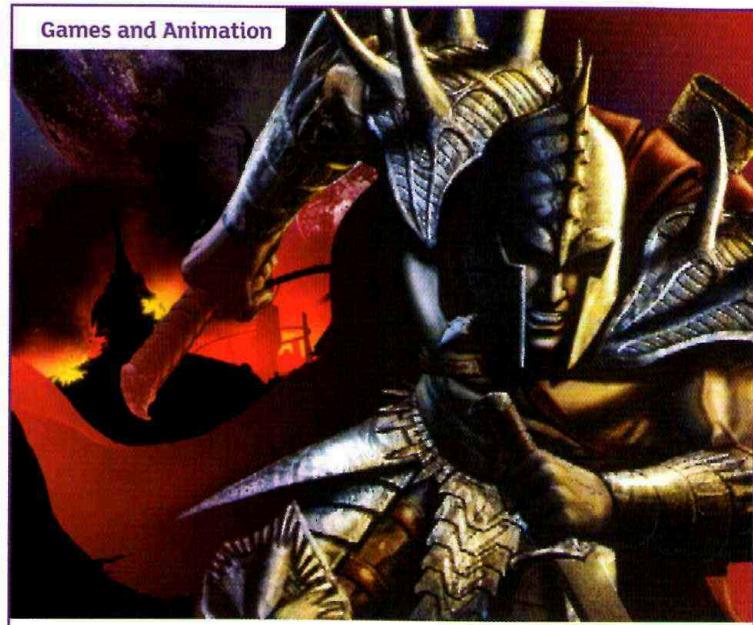
So that's about it as far as my workspace is concerned. I'm always looking out for what else I can add to amplify the energy of the area, but so far, I find that this is exactly what inspires me to sit in front of my screen and be creative.

**Warren Louw is a professional illustrator who lives in South Africa. See more of his work at [warrenlouw.deviantart.com](http://warrenlouw.deviantart.com).**



You've got to love Yamashita's girls! Rudi is definitely a favourite of mine out of all of his figures. I also use her on occasion for basic guideline reference, since her modelling is very well sculpted.

## Games and Animation



### MA Concept Art for Games and Animation

Taught by a team operating at the cutting edge, this course emphasises the importance of drawing skills as well as the ability to interpret ideas in a creative way. Available full or part-time, starting October or February.

Visit [www.tees.ac.uk/pg/games](http://www.tees.ac.uk/pg/games) or call 01642 342639.

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[www.COMPUTERTRAININGACADEMY.co.uk](http://www.COMPUTERTRAININGACADEMY.co.uk)

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Module 03: Life Drawing and Anatomy for comics and computer games



Module 05: Character Design for comics and computer games



That Ronaldo's a cheeky devil!  
Your design can be based on  
your favourite player's personality,  
as well as his physical appearance.

## Reader Competition! Fantasy football

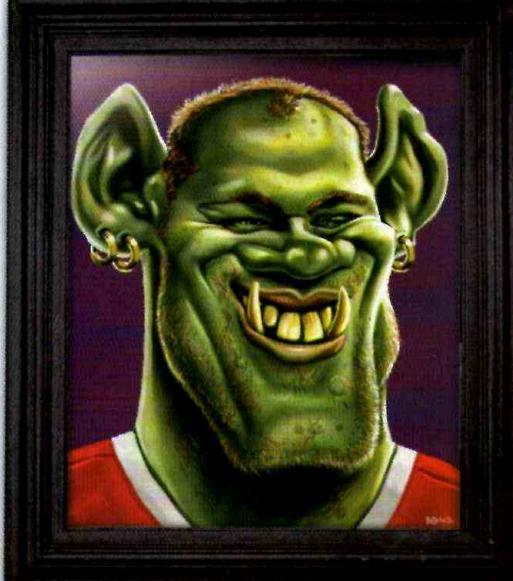
**Final whistle!** Your last chance to enter our competition, with over £9,800 in prizes to be won

With entries coming in thick and fast, and brand new prizes announced, this is your last chance to enter ImagineFX's fantasy football competition, in association with Dell. We want you to re-imagine one of the football players from World Cup history, including any of those appearing in South Africa this summer, and paint them as a fantasy character.

We're offering the winning 11 entrants a veritable feast of prizes, including a copy of Manga Studio EX 4, Poser Pro 2010, the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa game for PS3, and a copy of Corel Painter 11 each. The 11 winners, chosen by editor Claire Howlett and launch artists Bill Corbett and Euan Mactavish, will also become our first fantasy team to feature in issue 60 of ImagineFX, on sale 27 July 2010 in the UK. All entries will be posted on the website.

See the side panel for more details on how to enter your fantasy footballer creation, but be quick – the deadline is **12 June 2010**.

This agre version of Wayne Rooney would scare the life out of opposition defenders with more than just his footballing skill.



### THE IMPORTANT RULES BIT

#### **The challenge**

Paint your favourite international football player as a fantasy character or creature. It can be a full-size character of fantastical craziness, or a head and shoulders image, but preferably submit your creations on a white background.

#### **How to enter**

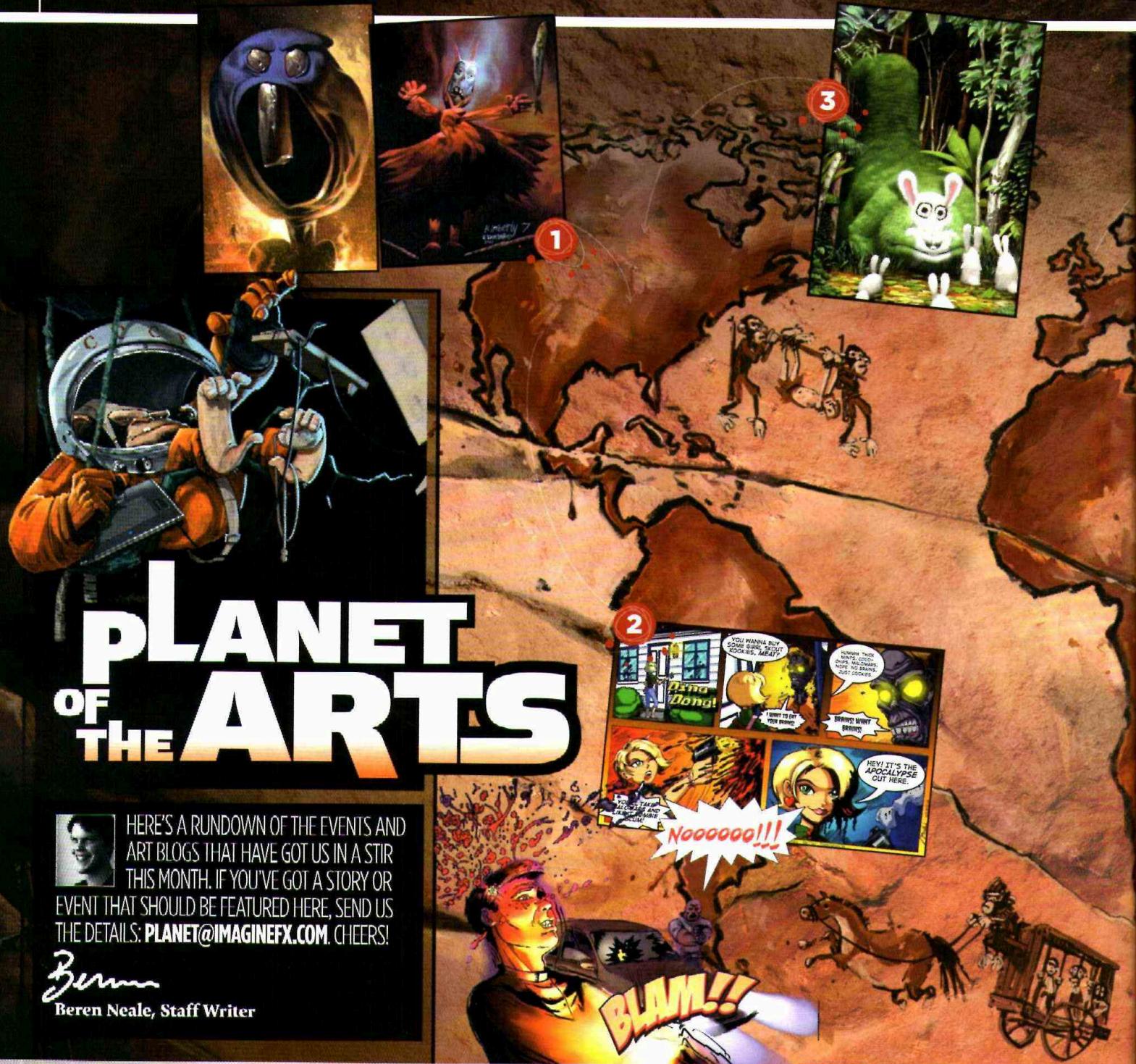
Once you've created your beastly image, upload it to [www.futurecompetitions.com/fanfoot](http://www.futurecompetitions.com/fanfoot) as a JPG, making sure it doesn't exceed 2MB (thumbnails are accepted). Remember to tell us who your character represents in the file name – ronaldo.jpg, for example.

#### **The prizes**

We've got goodies worth **more than £9,800** to give away: 11 copies of Manga Studio EX 4, worth £225.09 each; 11 copies of Poser Pro 2010, worth £349.95 each; 11 copies of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa game for PS3, worth £49.99 each; and 11 copies of Corel Painter 11, worth £269 each!

The 11 best entries, chosen by Claire Howlett and launch artists Bill Corbett and Euan Mactavish, will also become our first fantasy team to feature in issue 60 of IFX, which goes on sale 27 July 2010 in the UK.

**THE RULES:** 1. Employees of Future Publishing Ltd and their immediate families or agents are not eligible to enter this competition. 2. Only one entry per person. Multiple entries will be discarded. 3. Entries must be received by 12 June 2010, which is the closing date. 4. All entries will be judged by Claire Howlett and two independent judges. Their decision is final. 5. The winner must agree to allow their image to be used by ImagineFX during the period of 12 June 2010 and 12 June 2011, and in any promotional or marketing material. 6. The winning artist must also agree to any image manipulation/enhancement if the quality is not to the required standard. 7. ImagineFX and Future Publishing reserve the right to postpone the selection of a winner indefinitely if the standard of quality is not to the required level. 8. No cash alternative. 9. The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 10. You will retain all rights you have in the copyright and other intellectual property rights comprising the competition entry, but you grant ImagineFX the right to republish your competition entry internationally. 11. All information is correct at the time of going to press. For full Future Publishing terms and rules please visit: [www.imaginefx.com/terms-rules](http://www.imaginefx.com/terms-rules).



## PLANET OF THE ARTS



HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE EVENTS AND ART BLOGS THAT HAVE GOT US IN A STIR THIS MONTH. IF YOU'VE GOT A STORY OR EVENT THAT SHOULD BE FEATURED HERE, SEND US THE DETAILS: [PLANET@IMAGINEFX.COM](mailto:PLANET@IMAGINEFX.COM). CHEERS!

*Beren*

Beren Neale, Staff Writer

### MONSTER ENGINE

Dave Devries | US

**1** Dave Devries redraws kids' images with his knowledge of colour, texture and shading. The results are unique fantasy characters, some surreal, some terrifying. [www.themonsterengine.com](http://www.themonsterengine.com)

### INKBOT.NET

Online comic site | US

**2** Having launched its new creator-owned comic site in April, Inkbot offers a platform for comic-related discussion, delivering at least one new exclusive comic title per month. [www.inkbot.net](http://www.inkbot.net)

### SKETCHOHOLIC

Bobby Chui | Canada

**3** Bobby's exuberant approach to his live streams infuses everything on this site, with one-hour competitions, interviews and ideas to improve your work, all for free. [www.sketchoholic.com](http://www.sketchoholic.com)

### PETER MCKINSTRY

New site | England

**4** All fans of Doctor Who, Torchwood and Harry Potter will be pleased to hear of Peter's new site, which features his concept artwork for those titles and more. [www.petermckinstry.com](http://www.petermckinstry.com)

# Your fantasy art universe



**GLENN PEARCE**  
Comic artist | Australia

**5** We love new sites that show a passion for fantasy art and are updated regularly, so we were pleased to find this one by the Zombie Chicken Catcher. [zombiechickencatcher.blogspot.com](http://zombiechickencatcher.blogspot.com)

**PATRICK JONES**  
Online store | Australia

**6** We're huge fans of Patrick's art, so it's great to hear that he's opened an online store selling a series of sci-fi and fantasy downloadable DVD tutorials and books. [pjartworks.blogspot.com](http://pjartworks.blogspot.com)

Map art by Jonny Duddle, [www.duddlebug.com](http://www.duddlebug.com)

## SKETCH JAM

These Manchester artists band together for comic jams, free snacks and discounted drinks!

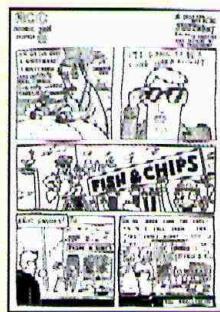


### Manchester Comix Collective

LOCATION: Sandman, 109 Chorlton Street, Manchester, England

WHEN: The last Sunday of every month

WEB: [manchestercomixcollective.mugge.com](http://manchestercomixcollective.mugge.com)



Comic talent of all description meet on the last Sunday of every month.



There's plenty of free food, although you may have to donate to the snacks stash.

Supreme chimp: organiser Adam Cadwell also provides free material.

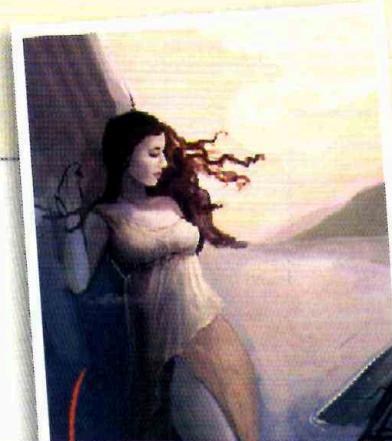


Free to enter, participants are encouraged to draw what they like or join in with comic jams and fun drawing exercises. There's also 10 per cent off booze at the bar!

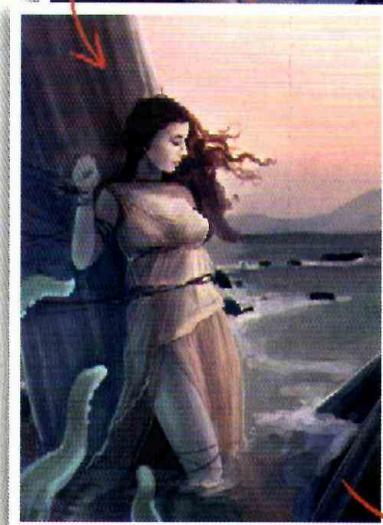
# Winners

## Image of the month

**Antique art** Narrowing down the broad theme of Greek Mythology to one moment of tense anticipation



Marthe depicted the uncertain moment before the Ethiopian princess is confronted by one of Poseidon's sea monsters.



### Forum crit



"Wonderful picture! I love the colours, and the blending of the sky colour in the water is done perfectly."

Derek Brewster (pygar1)



Although Marthe 'Arthemis' Jonkers recently started work for the Dutch Little Chicken Game Company, she still found time to enter and win our Greek Mythology weekly challenge.

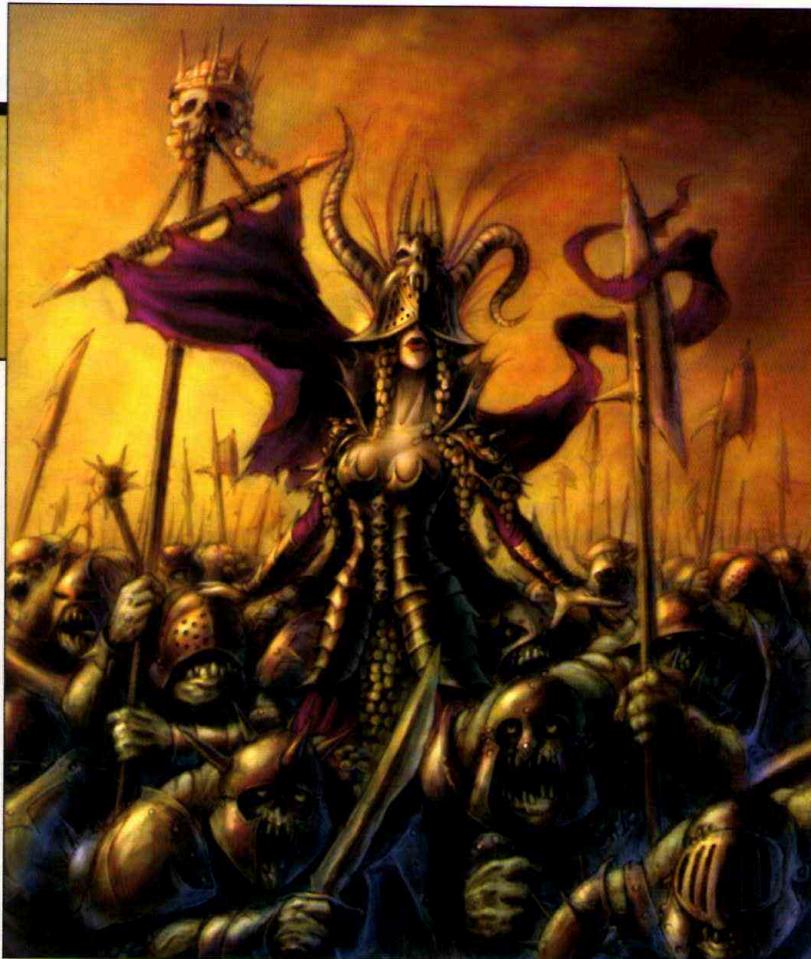
Having studied archaeology, Marthe has a fascination with stories of ancient culture and admits to being charmed by the subject's potential. "A lot of my art is inspired by myths and folklore," she says, "so when I saw this topic I immediately started drawing." Marthe chose the tale of Andromeda, and has depicted the tenseness of the moment perfectly.

**MYFX THEME:** Greek Mythology

**WINNER:** Artemis

**GALLERY:** [www.imaginefx.com/Arthemis](http://www.imaginefx.com/Arthemis)

# Forum winners

**MYFX THEME: The Dark Queen****WINNER:** Christian Schwager (schwager)**GALLERY:** [www.imaginefx.com/schwager](http://www.imaginefx.com/schwager)

"As well as capturing the darkness of the theme in the Queen herself, I also tried to include a whimsical element in my piece, in the form of the diminutive stature of her war host."

**MYFX THEME: Fool's Finance****WINNER:** Sarah Heleen Pels (Sarah)**GALLERY:** [www.imaginefx.com/Sarah](http://www.imaginefx.com/Sarah)

"When I saw the theme, my first thought was, 'that's too difficult,' but all of a sudden I saw this man smoking his cigarette made of a euro bank note, and I started painting. It all came to me naturally then."

**MYFX THEME: Mini Skirt and a Ray Gun****WINNER:** Jonathan Taylor (jonnymarvel)**GALLERY:** [www.imaginefx.com/jonnymarvel](http://www.imaginefx.com/jonnymarvel)

"I've spent too long on 'serious' paintings, so it's good to break free and go nuts with a piece now and again. And hey - with a title like that, you have to!"

**MYFX THEME: Cybernetic Fae****WINNER:** Emma Wyre (Foolbot)**GALLERY:** [www.imaginefx.com/Foolbot](http://www.imaginefx.com/Foolbot)

"I loved this challenge, because it gave me a chance to combine two things that really inspire me. I wanted to give the image a feeling of coexistence between nature and technology while still adding elements of a fairy tale. I loved seeing everyone's entries and how they expressed their ideas - each one was unique and interesting."

# Letters

## YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, Claire Howlett, on [claire@imaginefx.com](mailto:claire@imaginefx.com) or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK



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[www.facebook.com/imaginefx](http://www.facebook.com/imaginefx)

### Getting dolled up

I have no clue how to do digital art, but I use IFX for my textile art. The magazine is so inspiring for my creations. I often use your shading techniques for skin tones and faces on my dolls and the body postures for my patterns. It would be amazing if IFX had a special on faeries, angels and mermaids – mystical creatures rather than the darker side that's more dominant in the magazine.

*Cassie Rafferty, UK*

**Claire replies** Hopefully you loved our last issue with the A-Z of fantasy creatures, Cassie. It's cool to know we inspire creative people beyond the realms of digital art.

**Receiving worldwide praise**  
I just wanted to thank IFX for selecting my art for Reader Artist of the Month in issue 53. I received emails from artists all over the world expressing their appreciation of my work. I also want to thank Marta Dahlig for her kind words. I was pleasantly surprised to see 'The Doors of Time' inset. Originally it was a study of someone I had seen from a great distance. As I continued, it began to mean something much deeper. I had always admired Marta and any number of other "high priestesses" of modern fantasy art. The figure reaching through the dimensions symbolised my attempts to capture that kind of fame, while the female figure already held that magic. Thank you for giving me the chance to feel what it's really like.

*Kurt Williams, US*

**Claire replies** It's good to hear you're getting exposure, Kurt. Perhaps this will inspire others to send in their art to [fxpose@imaginefx.com](mailto:fxpose@imaginefx.com). What are you waiting for?



Cassie uses art techniques printed in ImagineFX to refine her doll creations.



### DID YOU MISS ISSUE 57?

We've still got a few copies, but hurry! See page 55 to get one.



Students at New York's SVA will be able to pick up art techniques from Donato Giancola – lucky people!

### Learning from the master

I'm studying at the School of Visual Arts in New York City and in the process of figuring out my schedule for my senior year. Your piece on Donato Giancola and his beautiful work in the April issue confirmed my decision to take the sci-fi illustration course he teaches here. Now I'm really excited, thanks to you guys!

*Christine, US*

**Claire replies** I love Donato's art, too. I'm also jealous that you'll be taught by the great man in person! Let us know how you get on.

### This is Tasmania calling

Thank you for bringing your godsend of an arts magazine to a place like this and giving me art advice, workshops, brushes, ideas, encouragement and best of all, hope. Tasmania isn't a place where people expect you to get far in anything, and those who do break through are often told they've done so based on luck rather than effort. I've had my parents, teachers and even my boss tell me that there's no hope of breaking into the arts industry if I live in Tasmania, and when I tell them I want to become a concept artist or illustrator they shake their heads and laugh.

Then friends told me of your magazine and I felt a window of opportunity open for me. Issue 47, my first copy of IFX, still holds a place in my heart. I've been collecting ever since and have used your workshops in my arts project. Although I haven't finished school yet, I hope to get a job in the games industry one day, or better, a job on your team because you've inspired me so much. Thank you for giving small places big hope. One day, I'll shake your hand in gratitude.

*Sofia Lopez, Tasmania*

**Claire replies** Sofia, it's not location that you need to become an artist, but energy, commitment and the willingness to learn. Post your art online and I'm sure that learning from a global online community will help take you to the places you want to go. Good luck, and thanks for your email.



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### A 3D artist says thanks...

I discovered your magazine in the search for something to help me with my art. I was at a low point with my drawing skills and needed some extra teaching that would help guide them further. Your magazine certainly did that, and I'm grateful to have come across it. There were many other outstanding magazines available, but a quick flick through each swayed me back towards yours. It had everything that I was looking for. I've bought many how-to books and magazines in the past, but it was yours that made me smile after trying out some of the tips.

I'm not the greatest drawer, but I saw improvement and it made drawing easier to approach. I guess it was also because of all the amazing artwork in there that inspired me. I'm an animation student and don't get to improve on my drawing skills that much, so it means a lot to get the extra help. Everything in the magazine has helped me in areas I never imagined I would improve on. It's got me to consider other media that I could explore, rather than just drawing in pencil.

Keep doing what you're doing, because I back you up all the way with your approach to digital art. I think you've done more than just cover digital art here – you've helped someone such as myself who doesn't do digital art, but 3D animation.

*Anne Thao, Australia*

**Claire replies** Anne, thanks so much for writing in. Hopefully with your dA Premium Membership prize, you'll be able to share your newfound drawing skills with the world.

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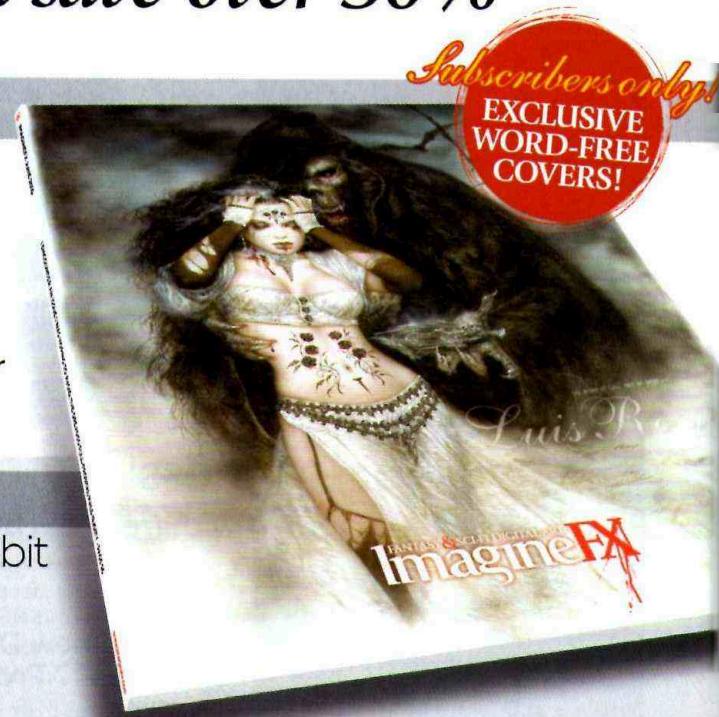
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**US AND CANADIAN READERS PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 89**

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# Artist Q&A

GOT A QUESTION FOR OUR EXPERTS? LET US EASE YOUR ART-ACHE AT [HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM](mailto:HELP@IMAGINEFX.COM)

## The FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX panel

### David Sourwine



David entered the illustration field in 2003 and currently contributes to Wizards of the Coast, Fantasy Flight Games, Fiery Dragon, and Scholastic.

[www.sourwine.illusorywinds.com](http://www.sourwine.illusorywinds.com)

### Sarel Theron



Trained as a traditional fine artist and illustrator, Sarel now works as a digital artist, specialising in matte painting and concept art.

[www.sareltheron.com](http://www.sareltheron.com)

### Lauren K Cannon



Lauren is a 23-year-old fantasy artist who specialises in the surreal. She lives in a small woodland village in New Jersey, US.

[www.navate.com](http://www.navate.com)

### Cynthia Sheppard



Cynthia is a freelance digital artist. With a background in traditional painting, she likes to bring classical techniques to her work on digital canvas.

[www.sheppard-arts.com](http://www.sheppard-arts.com)

### Nick Kilisian



Nick has worked in animation and illustration for the past 10 years. However, his passion lies in story-telling and sequential art.

[nickkilisian.wordpress.com](http://nickkilisian.wordpress.com)

### Dave Allsop



UK-based Dave is a fantasy illustrator for Wizards of the Coast, Nightfall Games and White Wolf among others. He also works in video games.

[www.daveallsop.info](http://www.daveallsop.info)

### Davi Blight



Based in Louisiana, US, Davi has helped create and maintain the community of ConceptArt.org, and founded [www.creaturespot.com](http://www.creaturespot.com).

[daviblight.blogspot.com](http://daviblight.blogspot.com)

### Question

Are there any simple tricks I can use to give a human face a weird, alien appearance?

*Katie Osmond, US*

### Answer

Lauren replies



Human faces follow certain rules of proportion. In art especially, these are idealised to create faces that are generically attractive. The moment you deviate from this formula, faces start to look unique. Deviate a little too much, and they begin to look downright strange.

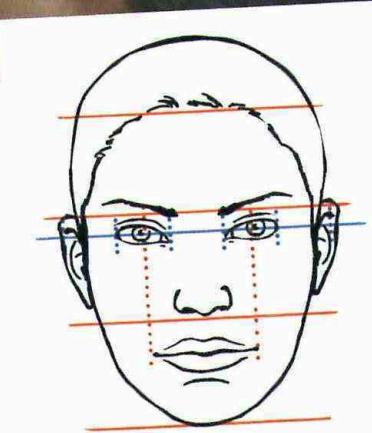
Let's first establish what the rules are for a generic face. The eye sockets are halfway down the skull. The face itself, from the hairline to the chin, can be split into thirds. The first third is the forehead, ending with the brow bone. The second third contains the eyes and nose, and the final third is from the bottom of the nose to the chin. The corners of the mouth are usually in line with the inner third of the eye itself, and the face should be approximately five eye-widths wide.

When you're aiming for a weird face, play with that generic formula. Fudge the proportions and twist how the features relate to each other. Don't just focus on the major features, but also play with facial structure, such as tapering the chin or making the eye sockets too far apart. Furthermore, don't be shy about playing with colouring either: irises that are too light, too dark, or too large will make a face look strange, as will other small touches such as over-smooth skin.



With a few simple tweaks, you can transform a human face into something otherworldly. It can be subtle or obvious, and as creative as you like.

Understanding how a normal face is put together enables us to manipulate the proportions into something stranger and more interesting.



## Step-by-step: Make a human face appear unsettling



1 If you're starting with a fairly normal face, the Transform tool is a great way to weird things up quickly. Using the Lasso tool to select an area, then Transform to scale, I can warp and rotate different areas. The Liquify filter can also be handy.



2 Eyes are a natural focal point, so play them up. Here, I've made the irises a touch too large and a strange honey colour. Her eyes are also too far apart, and I've left off her eyelashes and eyebrows.



3 Changing details in other parts of the face can add a lot to a strange appearance. In addition to the too-small nose and wide mouth, I've made her top lip blend into the rest of her face. It's a small touch, but the result is bizarre.

## Question

How do I paint realistic-looking flowing and splashing water in Painter?

Adele Sheppard, England



## Answer Davi replies



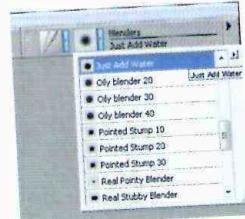
The best way to approach painting flowing and splashing water is to illustrate the water in motion instead of slaving over rendering hundreds of detailed water droplets. While painting every water droplet from a splashing liquid can make an amazing piece, if the image isn't about the water, it might be time-consuming for a result that isn't the focus.

To create a quick environment that shows how this can be achieved, I paint the foundation rocks and then layer the cool blue water over the top of the surfaces. Using the Blending brush called Just Add Water in Painter, I create a sense of motion and direction to the

water. Over the top of the pouring water, I pepper areas where the water falls onto a surface using an airbrush. This helps to capture a sense of water drops splashing into a mist. Lastly, I use Painter's Distortion brushes very lightly to create more organic and random movement to the water, so that the movement doesn't look too uniform and unnatural.

## Artist's secret

BEAUTIFUL BLENDING BRUSHES  
You can achieve amazing results by using the Blending brushes in Painter. The most useful of these brushes is called Just Add Water, which can be used to blend or to push paint around on the canvas smoothly.



# ImagineNation Artist Q&A

## Question

How should I draw and paint a firework display?

Carol Beamish, England

## Answer

Cynthia replies



The blast we see from a firework is caused by thousands of tiny burning pieces of metal,

so I would approach drawing fireworks as if they were round particle clouds, using a lot of stippling. Working on a dark night sky-coloured background, I start in the centre and work my way out, making flecks with a small round brush. You could also use one of Photoshop's large speckle brushes to add to the thickness of the cloud. Since these hot metal bits are normally brightly saturated, I use a fully saturated colour at a high opacity to do this part. I want to end up with a round mass of dots that's very dense toward the central blast area, and sparser as it fans out to the edges.

To create the effect that the particles are glowing, I use a larger soft round brush on a low to medium opacity. I vary the thickness and softness of the brush to create variation among the particles. For the centre of the blast I create a radial gradient (faded to transparent) on an Overlay layer using a saturated colour. I also try varying the colours of the particles.

I also add light trails to the particles. Most people are used to seeing fireworks in photography or on TV, in which cases there's likely going to be a little shutter delay. Furthermore, when watching a fireworks display in real life it sometimes takes our eyes a minute to catch up with the burning particles as they fall, creating a trail effect. In this case I would add the trails manually with long strokes using a hard round brush, or use the Smudge tool to extrude colour from the particles.

Clustered speckling with round brushes and a colour Overlay create the illusion of a blast of burning particles.



## Question

What should I be looking at when drawing from life?

Matthew Dalby, US

## Answer

Nick replies



Figure drawing from life holds more answers on the subtleties of weight transfer and structural mechanics of the human form than a static image or drawing. At my drawing sessions I get the most out of the quick sketch, where you're forced to sketch for between one and five minutes, for about three hours per session. This forces you to get the essential bits down on paper, such as the gesture, volumes, shape and attitude of the model, before the model changes the pose. Try to focus on capturing the action of the model: you don't want to sketch a jumble of muscles and bulges, but rather a statement of what's happening. A good life sketch knows how to omit detail and simply focus on first impressions. Details can always be added afterwards.

When you next sit down and draw from your imagination, your visual memory is heightened. Like the quick sketch sessions, posing should be done efficiently when you're doing many sketches that are half-size or smaller. For example, thumbnails help to get into a character's headspace.



The artists that I've been most inspired by manage to attend life-drawing classes on a weekly basis, and have done so for the past few decades.

## Question

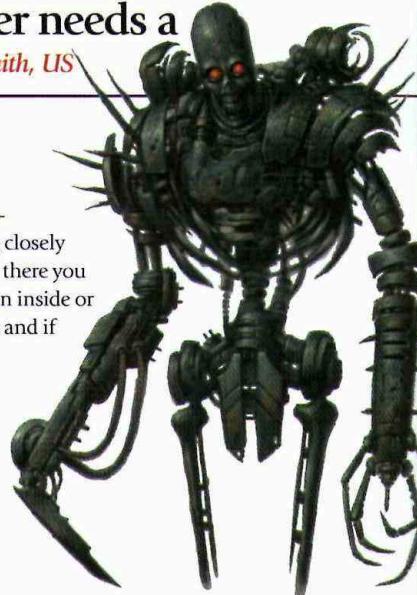
I've realised my character needs a background – help! *Jo Smith, US*

## Answer

Dave replies



If you're adding a background to a pre-existing character, start off by looking closely at how you've lit the body form. From there you can roughly decide whether to paint an inside or outdoors location, set it at night or in the daytime and if there should a strong light source in your scene (particularly if the character is in high contrast). Build up your background in gradual layers of colours and tones, ensuring that it matches with the foreground character.



## Question

How should I use photo samples to add texture and colour tone to my paintings?

Jamie Jones, Australia

## Answer

David replies

The biggest mistake is to drop your texture over the image and alter the layer options. This adds texture and colour, but will leave the picture looking flat and ambiguous.

I first define the light source and paint the planes that the final image will have, thus establishing the overall shape. Then I match my picture texture with that of my painted light source by making sure the light is coming in from the same side. Using the Stamp tool and a Palette Knife brush tip, I paint each plane of the rock surface on a separate layer.

I then transform my texture pattern to match the new slope and perspective of the next plane that I'll paint in my image. Once all the planes are textured I merge them and duplicate the layer, setting one to Screen and the other to Overlay. On the Screen layer I build the highlights up by erasing the shadows. I also play around with the opacity values on the Overlay layer.

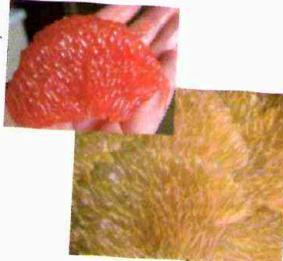
Don't forget to blur textures that are farther away from your focal point. Your eye will be drawn to the sharp contrast created with textures and if it's not where you want the viewer to be looking then you're not helping your image.



### Artist's secret

#### UNIQUE TEXTURES

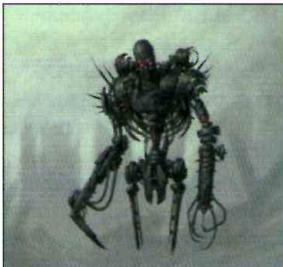
Need fantastical skin or stylised textures? Try thinking outside of the box. Ever considered using a grapefruit for aquatic skin? There are so many great texture combinations out there - start looking for them today!



Using the planes I created in my under painting I add textures to each surface angle, then build up the highlights with a layer set to Screen and erase the shadows. The final layer is set to Overlay.

## Step-by-step: Putting a character in its place

1 I place the android on a wider canvas and then start roughing in shapes in the background. These are just suggestions of light and shadow, colour and tone. I don't want to put in anything too specific



at this stage and so I keep all the new additions as separate layers so that they can be altered or completely removed as I go along.

2 I choose a daylight source that corresponds with the lighting of the mechanical character and begin adding in more form and definition to the background. I'm careful not to add too



much detail to the background elements because they may end up detracting from the android, which is the painting's focal point.

3 The ruined city is starting to take shape as I add layers of shadow and light details, but I feel that the character is looking a bit too stark against the hazy backdrop. So I add in some elements in the foreground, along with some murky smoke trails to soften the android's outline slightly and tie him in with the environment.



# ImagineNation Artist Q&A

## Question

How can I capture an attitude in my characters?

Macy Green, US

## Answer

Nick replies



I first ask myself what the character is feeling and how I want this to come across through physical attitude.

When getting into the character's head in this way you need to be able to act on some level with your pencil.

Consider taking your sketchbook out to the local cafés. Rather than simply copy the form, try to find the essential bits that enable the audience to see the attitude of the person that you're drawing on paper.

Back in the studio, this knowledge can be transferred into imaginary characters. First I

capture the attitude and then build the forms on top. The head, shoulders and hands are good starting points, but nothing is more effective than trying to feel in your own body what the character is experiencing. I sketch quickly and create multiple images and poses, then combine them onto one sheet in Photoshop to get an idea of which pose best captures the attitude I'm looking for. This can then be photocopied, blown up, cleaned-up and inked.



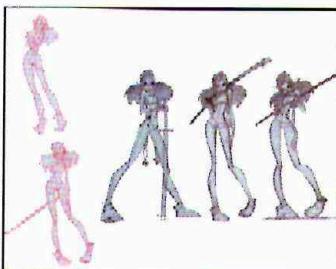
## Artist's secret

### PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER

To improve my ink skills I draw and ink a variety of isolated body parts. I practise pushing the brush away from me and pulling it toward me, finding out what feels best. Over time I move on to different parts until I cover the entire figure.

It's the poise of the character that contributes to their overall attitude, which the viewer then picks up on.

## Step-by-step: Finding your character's attitude



1 I ask myself what the character is feeling and how I want this to come across through physical attitude. Using a Col-erase, carmine Red, Tuscan red, or brown and or Staedtler HB - 3B pencils, I'll do four or five half-sized sketches, spending no more than five minutes on each pose.



2 I'm concerned about the readability of the graphic shapes that I'm putting down. To reduce the ambiguity of the shapes I look for the simplest volumes by using C curves, S curves and straights. Defining both the cross contours and small details sells the structural volume.



3 I ink with a Japanese Pentel Brush Pen or clean up with a hard pencil, either HB or H. When it comes to inking, stay confident when putting down the lines. Always look at the end destination, rather than your pen tip. If you do the latter you'll get sucked into it and your line quality will change.

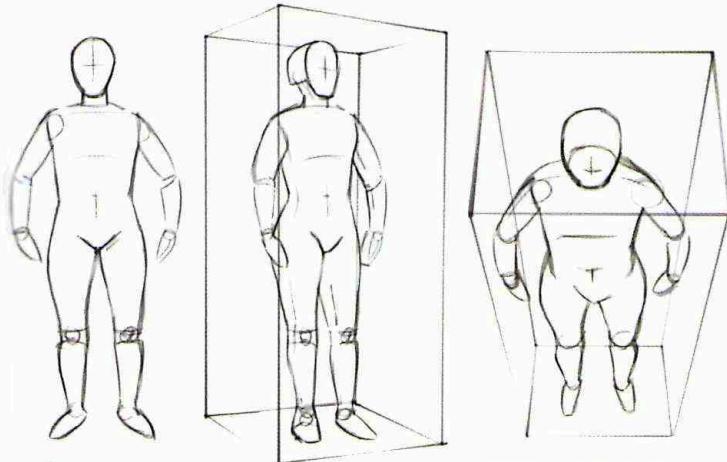


4 I colour in Photoshop without affecting the line work. I start with the flat layer by putting down the base colour. On the next layer, on Multiply, I add the shadows. I then proceed with a third layer adding highlights, this time using Normal so that I have an opaque quality to it.

## Question

### How do I draw perspective in anatomy?

Laurent Gilliard, France



A figure shown in flat, one-point, and two-point perspective.

## Answer

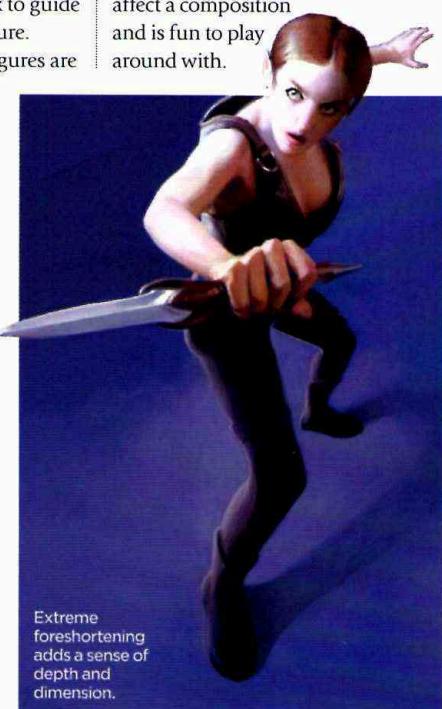
Cynthia replies

 To decide how and where your figure can be positioned within a composition, start by drawing a 3D box in its place. This box will start you off with guidelines to match to the core structural parts of the figure, such as the spine. By building a body out of polygons, you can use the angles in the box to guide the various shapes of the figure.

Even with a box model, figures are difficult to visualise at extreme angles without some kind of further reference. Software like Poser can be helpful in determining what parts of a figure overlap or are foreshortened at different angles. Photo reference is another good way to get the basics down, but is a little harder to control; lens distortion must be compensated for to achieve accurate foreshortening. As a rule, the closer the camera is to the subject, the more exaggerated the distortion of perspective will be.

Foreshortening of limbs is perhaps one of the most difficult effects to achieve convincingly in anatomic

perspective, but can also be aided by linear guides and/or good reference material. You must also consider the perspective imposed on your composition. Viewing a figure from below imbues them with power; from above they lose power. There's a lot to consider when posing characters in this way, but it can affect a composition and is fun to play around with.



Extreme foreshortening adds a sense of depth and dimension.

## Question

### What's the best way to create a watercolour brush in Photoshop?

Martin Collins, Australia

## Answer

David replies



I want a bleed effect in my brush so I'll make the tip shape a star and then scatter it 80 per cent on both axis. This looks speckled to me so I set spacing to zero and turn my jitter count up to ten. Now I have a solid brush full of pigment with a dry bleed look.

Because I'm after a transparent characteristic, I add it in the Dual Brush stage. To create this effect I pick a soft edge generic brush and set a large diameter. I'll now scatter it to create a wash-like gradient, finally choosing Linear burn to complete this stage and the effect.

Watercolours pigments are heavy and sit in the grooves of the paper. This is easy to mimic: just



Here's a watercolour brush that's been broken down into simple stages, then added together to give the final result.

add a watercolour paper texture to it, which is found in the Texture menu under Artistic surfaces. I'll choose Overlay so that it creates sharper edges, which are seen in watercolours. Finally, I set the Opacity to Pen pressure, because I want to apply wash effects and a small flow jitter at around five per cent to create creases.

## Question

### How can I make windows glisten properly in the sunlight?

Lucy Kennedy, UK

## Answer

Sarel replies



The key here is to create strong highlights within your buildings. Visit a city at sunset and observe how the windows facing the setting sun reflect the low light. You'll notice the specular highlights on windows that are in sunlight and how they often have bright yellow or red coronas surrounding

them. Windows in shadow or out of direct sunlight will be darker. To help achieve a more dynamic glistening effect, paint a cloudy sky that only permits a few of the sun's rays to reach the city. Allow these rays to bathe your city's focal points in pools of intense sparkling light, while keeping the rest of the city in shadow.

The windows in direct sunlight are brightly lit while others remain dark, giving the city a glistening appearance.



# ImagineNation Artist Q&A

## Question

How do I paint flowing folds of material convincingly?

Peter Mann, Scotland

## Answer

Lauren replies



Flowing material is a fantastic way to add interest or drama to any sort of image, so mastering the 'how' is a valuable skill. Cloth is by nature very organic, which can make it difficult to figure out in a painting. But luckily, once you understand the basics, it's easy to stylise and tailor to your needs.

The quickest way to master folds of fabric is to go right to the real thing. Visit a textile store and buy a few yards of fabrics with different weights and textures, drape them over some chairs and start sketching what you see. Study how the folds change depending on the type of fabric. Heavy cotton will fall completely differently from thin gauze, for example. Having the difference right in front of you, which you can manipulate as needed, is the best visual reference you can have for something like cloth.

Thin, light materials are the best reference for flowing folds. You'll find that they bend and fold very sharply, and ripple if blown. When painting a fabric, start simple and just block in the basic shape and major folds, keeping note of the directional flow of the material. Make sure that the folds aren't all equal and fully visible: cloth has depth, and will fold into itself and twist around. Pay close attention to how the folds behave when you do studies of real cloth, and you'll learn the skills you need to create convincing folds from your imagination.

Creating studies of real cloth is a key asset to mastering the art of flowing fantasy folds.



Drawing arrows on a separate layer is an excellent way to double-check that your folds are working together and flowing in a logical way.

## Question

How do I create realistic, multi-limbed creatures?

Marie-Élise Dupont, France

*(Inset image: A detailed illustration of a multi-limbed, purple, spiny alien creature with a segmented body and multiple legs.)*

## Answer

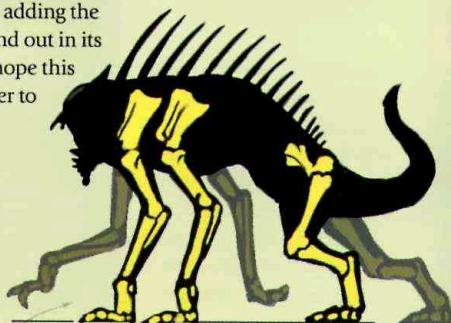
Davi replies



This is an excellent question, because of the increasing interest in creating monsters similar to the work of Neville Page ([www.nevillepage.com](http://www.nevillepage.com)). My first bit of advice is to learn the basic anatomy of a creature with similar anatomy to what you're creating. All professional creature designers need to understand the common types of limbs a mammal can have: plantigrade (those that walk with their feet on the ground, like humans), digitigrade (walking on fingers, like a bird or dog), and unguligrade (where the animal walks on the tips of its toes, like a deer). The knowledge of these types of limbs, and how they're used, will make your design much more believable.

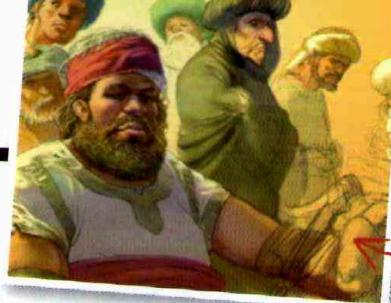
I took my knowledge of how a digitigrade creature would stand and applied it to a design to show how I would create such a creature. I produced the creature with an elongated torso, so that when I introduce the second set of limbs to the creature, it won't feel squashed. When adding the second set of limbs, I place them directly behind the first. Doing so helps to imply that the limbs work in close harmony when the beast strides. I also choose to make my creature's limbs muscular and lanky, to suggest that it might be a fast-moving predator.

Once you have these basic principles in place, the rest of the creature is all about adding the details so that it stands out in its own alien world. I hope this helps, and remember to study the anatomy before jumping in!



A rough example of how the skeletal anatomy of the digitigrade hexaped alien could be laid out.

For in-depth help with anatomy, turn to page 23 to find out about our special issue.



**Next month**  
**ON SALE: 29 June**  
Make a beard match a character's personality

## Question

Can you give me any tips on painting rain-soaked, reflective streets?

Alan Cook, England

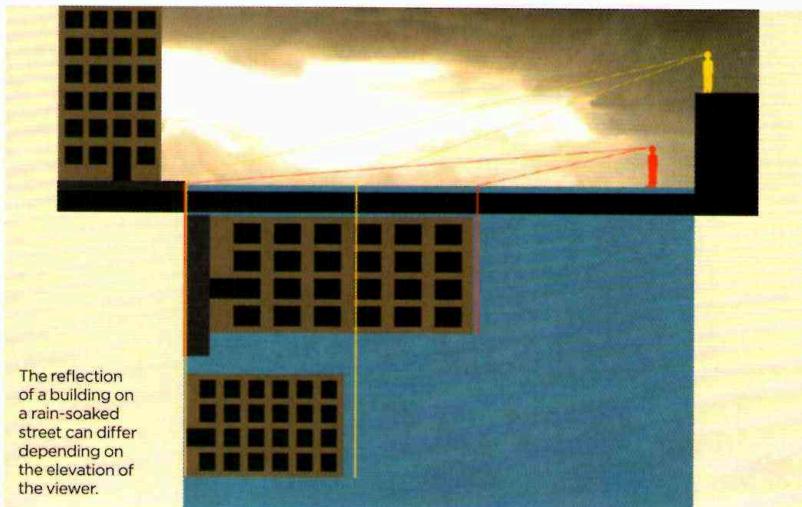
## Answer

Sarel replies

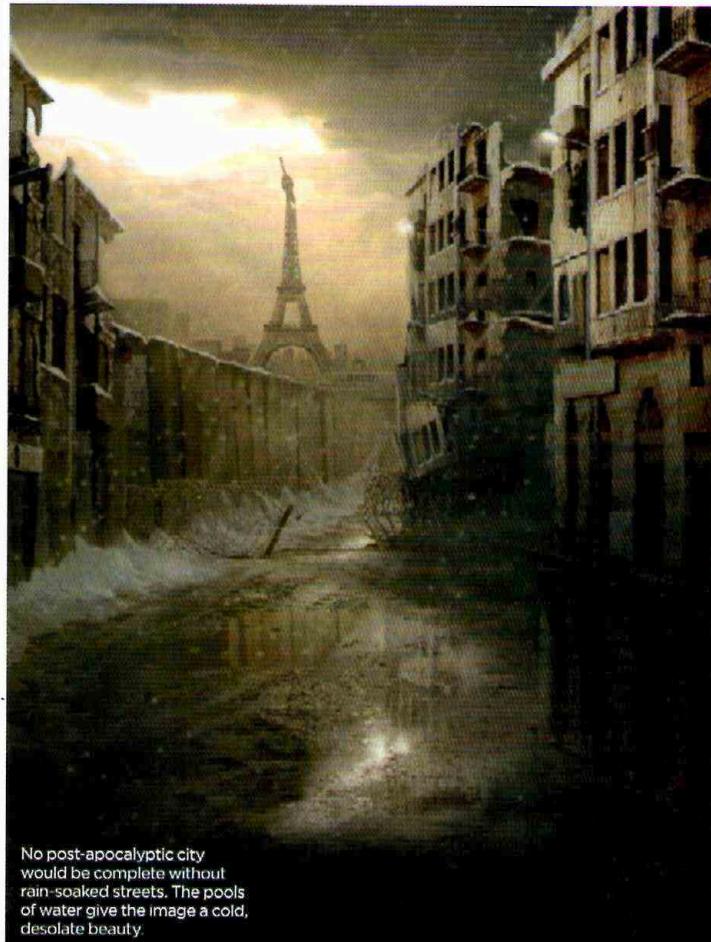
 There are a few important facts to keep in mind when painting rain-soaked streets. First, be aware that reflections in the water are seen from a different viewing angle than the actual objects that are being reflected. A common mistake many artists make is simply to paint an upside-down image of the buildings being reflected in the water, when in reality, what they should actually see in the reflection will depend on their elevation relative to the buildings that are being mirrored.

Buildings close to the water will be fully reflected, while only the tops of more distant structures will be seen. Wind will create ripples in the water, which will distort the reflections, while water in the foreground will be darker with minimal reflections, while distant water will have bright, almost mirror-like reflections.

Finally, remember that although reflections in the water will appear darker than the actual reflected objects, highlights such as streetlights or the sun will appear just as bright as the original light source.



The reflection of a building on a rain-soaked street can differ depending on the elevation of the viewer.



No post-apocalyptic city would be complete without rain-soaked streets. The pools of water give the image a cold, desolate beauty.

## Step-by-step: Reflecting the world in Photoshop

- 1 Select the areas you want reflected in the street in Photoshop, copy them to a new layer and flip them vertically. Use the



Distort tool to correct the viewing angle of the mirroring. Reflections seen from a lower viewpoint are always longer than those from a higher angle.

- 2 The reflective qualities of water will diminish, the closer it gets to the viewer. Use a large Eraser at 30 per cent



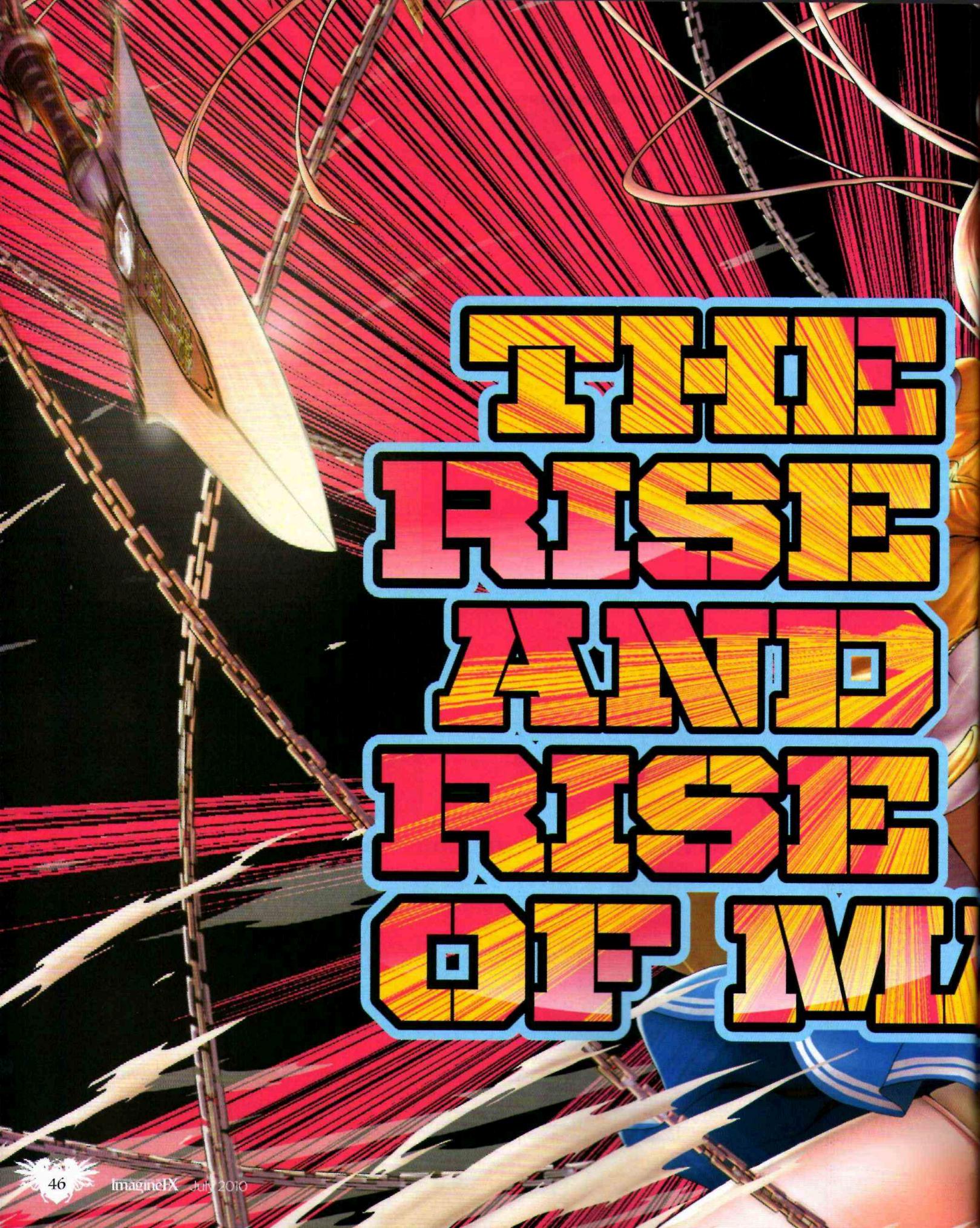
opacity and start to rub away the lower section of the reflection layer. Brighten and then increase the definition of the reflections in the distant water.

- 3 Add bright, specular highlights to your pools of water in the areas where it reflects the sun or street lights. Ripples can



be added by applying the Photoshop Ripple filter to your reflection layer, although you can usually achieve much better results if you paint them in manually.

**Got a digital art problem?** Is an image giving you art-ache? Our panel can help. Email your question to our experts at [help@imaginefx.com](mailto:help@imaginefx.com) or write to **Artist Q&A, ImagineFX, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK.**



46

ImagineFX July 2010

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RISE  
ONCE



anga inspire artists everywhere. Western and Japanese artists collaborate regularly: Moebius with Jiro Taniguchi, Frédéric

Boilet with Kan Takahama. Moebius told a Japanese magazine, "Japan is the one country about which I can say, 'I wish I was born there.' Manga is a rich form of Japanese cultural expression." Yet many foreign fans know little of manga's culture and development.

Manga is rooted in Japanese history, but modern manga was born of defeat, occupation and the atom bomb. It offers ways to process that experience, enabling communication between artist, reader, dream and reality. The world's most diverse graphic narrative industry has something for everyone, including a thriving female comics culture.

Osamu Tezuka and his followers reshaped Japan's manga and animation industry after the war. Twenty years after Tezuka's death, his protégés are still active, passing on his influence.

### The manga god

Tezuka's first professional work was published in 1946, five months after Japan's surrender. He died in 1989, after changing the face of popular culture, building links with foreign artists such as Moebius, making it possible for later artists to take street aesthetics into high society. His fans called him the God of Manga.

Here's the original Tezuka cover art for *Tetsuwan Atom*, showing Atom and his sister Utran.



Eisner Award nominee **Helen McCarthy** traces the development of modern manga, from post-war street entertainment to high art

► Tezuka is best known here for two TV series: *Tetsuwan Atom* (*Astro Boy*) and *Jungle Taitei* (*Kimba the White Lion*.) Both have the huge eyes, rounded lines and simplified graphics of most children's comics of the 1950s. Tezuka merchandised his characters early on, setting up the first US-style licensing department in Japan for *Astro Boy*. He also produced manga and animation in many styles. His subject matter was diverse, setting the pattern for the industry. He hated losing readers, and as his original fans grew up he made adult works for them. Ferociously competitive and interested in anything new, he absorbed every development in comics.

To manage his impossible workload, he recruited editors, room mates and fans as assistants, designed uniform line and colour

## Tezuka's subject matter was diverse, setting the pattern for the industry

tones, and graphics, and established working systems that are still used in manga studios. He even wrote the first "How to draw manga" book in 1950. His last words, as he lay dying of stomach cancer, were "I'm begging you, let me work."

### Making time for manga

Returning to bombed-out Kobe, 15-year-old Mitsuteru Yokoyama saw Tezuka's 1949 manga *Metropolis*. A manga addict, he quit a banking job after five months because it left him no time to draw. His use of light, shadow and line to convey suspense, his pacing and story development soon caught Tezuka's attention, and Yokoyama became one of his assistants. He also worked across genres, producing a historical action story and a manga for girls before *Tetsujin 28-go* (*Gigantor*) appeared in 1956. With its canny combination of giant robot, clever orphan schoolboy and moral conflict, its success rivalled *Astro Boy*.

Many consider Yokoyama's historical dramas his finest work. He used real and legendary sources from China, Japan and the Western to produce a string of hits about little witches, ninja, kings and heroes. He died in 2004, aged 69.

### Cyborgs and monsters

The Guinness Book of Records names Shotaro Ishinomori as creator of "the most comics by one author", yet his best-known

## What is manga style?

The manga rulebook was thrown out long ago - you don't have to be Japanese to draw it



Although the art style might be different, *Cyborg 009* (above) and *Summit of the Gods* (right) both utilise a panel approach.



The only absolute truth about manga style is that it doesn't exist. Manga is simply the Japanese word for comics, and any style an artist chooses is acceptable. The key factor is graphic narrative. Manga is storytelling.

Manga began as traditional Japanese art. In the 19th century, early manga artists were strongly influenced by Western art, especially American newspaper cartoons. Later, Japanese newspapers and magazines bought illustrations and strips from American and European publishers.

Today's manga embraces everything from grotesque distortion, deliberately simplistic drawing and highly detailed, neo-realistic work. Much material imported to the West conforms to the "big eyes, big hair" stereotype because the teenage mass market likes that style, but publishers like Vertical, Fanfare UK/Ponent Mon and Dark Horse offer more diverse books.

There's no single correct manga format, either. In the West we tend to think of manga as long-form episodic narratives, but in Japan short stories, strips and single-frame gags are popular. Early artists made three or four-panel gags strips and single pictures. Machiko Hasegawa's *Sazae-San* started as a four-panel newspaper strip in 1946 and kept its four-panel format until 1974. Longer narrative manga didn't become popular until the early years of the 20th century.

## Manga's creation and evolution



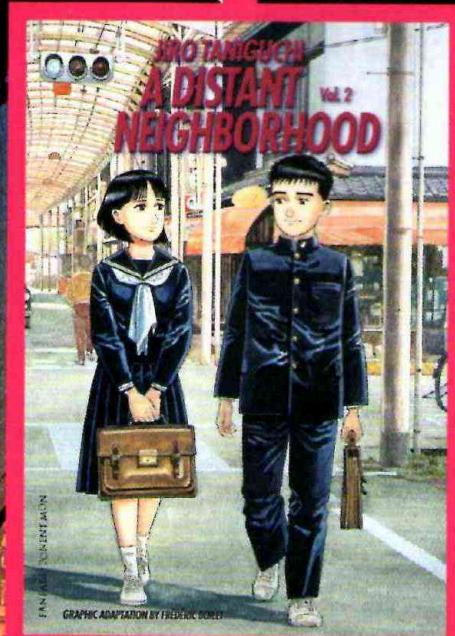
The cover art for Mitsuteru Yokoyama's *Tetsujin 28* shows why it was such a hit - boy hero meets really big robot!

### 670 onwards

Horyuji Temple, destroyed by fire in 670, is rebuilt at Nara. Some of the workmen installing the ceiling in the main hall risk losing their jobs by drawing caricatures (possibly their foremen and clients) on the inside of the ceiling boards. Their secret is safe until the boards are taken down for restoration centuries later.

1500s

Picture scrolls depicting Buddhist legend and classics of Japanese literature like *The Tale of Genji* are made to entertain and educate the upper classes. Sojo Toba, a Buddhist monk, is credited with four satirical scrolls depicting animals mimicking humans, fantasy creatures and people at play.



Manga embraces any style. Give your individuality free rein.

creation outside Japan is a live-action TV show. In 1975 he created *Ulimitsu Sentai Goranger*, and inspired *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. But manga was his passion.

In 1951, aged 13, he started submitting work to magazines and newspapers. His stories often focus on cyborgs and monsters, transformed by fate, fighting for justice in a harsh world. In 1953 Osamu Tezuka offered him work in Tokyo. Bunking off school, Ishinomori did a brief stint on *Astro Boy* around his mid-term exams, and never looked back.

His art style is similar to Tezuka's early work, with rounded lines and clear, dynamic movement. He shared Tezuka's humanistic and egalitarian sentiments. In *Cyborg 009* (1963) a character remarks, "To be of mixed race is not a shameful thing, in fact, you can be proud of it... There will undoubtedly come a time when nationalism and racism disappear."

## Entertaining rebellion

After the war the occupying forces censored all Japanese communications. Glorifying

1657

Japan is closed to foreigners. Despite repression, the economy develops and ordinary people have money to spend on luxuries. Over the next 250 years, a vibrant urban culture blossoms. The arts flourish and woodblock printing makes art affordable to the masses. Popular subjects include collectable series of views, pin-ups of actors and beauties, satires, broad comedy, cheap travel souvenirs and schlock-horror pictures of monsters, demons and murderers.

1853

Katsushika Hokusai's sketchbooks are printed and published in 14 volumes under the title *Hokusai Manga*.



1853

Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States Navy sails into Tokyo harbour with three heavily armed ships and forces Japan to open its frontiers to foreigners. Japanese art influences Western artists, while Western immigrants influence Japanese artists.

## LONE WOLF AND CUB

VOLUME 1  
THE ASSASSIN'S ROAD  
By KAZUO KOIKE & GOSEKI KOJIMA

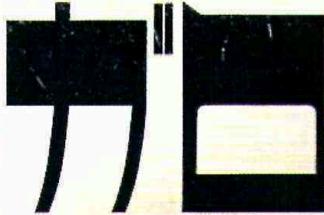


In 1970 Goseki Kojima successfully combined tense action-packed stories with traditional Japanese motifs, layouts and colours. Comic artists in the West recognised its many achievements.

the feudal system or Japan's heroic past was absolutely forbidden. Comics and kamishibai storytellers, seen as mere children's entertainment, sometimes escaped censorship. Kamishibai provided employment for several future manga greats until 1954, when the occupation ended.

Goseki Kojima was born on the same day as Tezuka in 1928, surviving him by 11 years. After high school he painted cinema posters. In 1950 he became a kamishibai artist, painting images for street-corner storytellers, and adapted classic novels as rental comics. Rental libraries boomed in post-war Japan – manga could be rented for far less than they cost to buy.

Kojima built up a loyal following, and in 1967 he made his first magazine sale. Three years later, *Manga Action* magazine published *Kozure Okami* (*Lone Wolf and Cub*), which he created with writer Kazuo Koike. His superb layouts showcase fights of gut-churning realism and tender moments of observation. The manga was a huge hit, winning a strong following overseas. Comic artist Frank Miller has ➤

No. 27  
1966

11月号



カムイ伝(24)

赤目プロ作品  
白土三平

Kiriko Nananan uses space and emptiness to brilliant effect, as shown here in her 1996 manga *Blue*.

Garo magazine was one of Japan's most adventurous and innovative anthologies.

Kiriko Nananan uses space and emptiness to brilliant effect, as shown here in her 1996 manga *Blue*.

Kiriko Nananan uses space and emptiness to brilliant effect, as shown here in her 1996 manga *Blue*.

acknowledged Kojima's influence on *Sin City* and *Ronin*. Novelist Max Allan Collins told a BBC interviewer that his *Road to Perdition* is "an unabashed homage to *Lone Wolf and Cub*".

### Class struggle

Sanpei Shirato, born in 1932, is the son of proletarian artist-activist Toki Okamoto. Renowned for his gritty drawing style, powerful characterizations and social criticism, he's also a celebrated essayist. He began as a kamishibai painter at 18, and the need to build tension across 12 to 20 pictures profoundly influenced his style.

His 1957 debut work, *Ninja Bugeicho* (Band of Ninja), was a hit with students and the intelligentsia, but his most important manga is probably *Kamui Den* (The Legend of Kamui). He and Katsuichi Nagai founded the legendary manga anthology *Garo* in 1964 to publish it.

*Garo* was part of the gekiga movement – a group of young comics creators, led by Tezuka fan Yoshihiro Tatsumi, seeking greater realism in manga and a new

1889

Kitazawa moves to *Iiji Shimpō* newspaper. From 1902 he contributes narrative comic strips inspired by his favorite US artists to *Jiji Manga*.

1905

Kitazawa founds *Tokyo Puck* magazine, published in Japanese, English and Chinese and sold in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and China.

1912

Ippei Okamoto begins to publish comics in the *Asahi* daily newspaper and in magazines.

1895

Rakuten Kitazawa, the father of modern manga, joins English-language magazine *Box of Curios* and learns to draw cartoons.

1915

The first boys' manga magazine, *Shonen Club*, is founded.

## Garō sought greater realism in manga and a new response to its changing society

A sense of art nouveau is present in all of CLAMP's manga, even though the team of four women shares drawing duties.



response to its changing society. *Garō*'s anti-authoritarian stance and alignment with class struggle made it popular with the student movements of the 1960s, but its circulation later declined. It closed in 2002.

Its egalitarian attitudes embraced non-mainstream female creators like Kiriko Nananan, whose debut work appeared there in 1993. Basing her stories and characters on life, Nananan says she is obsessed with "seeing between the lines" and uses spaces and backgrounds "to suggest feelings such as hope or emptiness". Small details often play a vital role in the story and so she refuses to use assistants. She draws her panels as isolated images, like a poster or T-shirt, but so far hasn't followed Junko Mizuno into the world of merchandising.

### Women at work

Tezuka and Yokoyama made manga for girls, but female mangaka (a manga artist) were active too, carrying on a pre-war

tradition. As the Japanese women's movement developed, more women became mangaka.

Machiko Hasegawa was born in 1920, and started selling illustrations to Shojo Club magazine at the age of 14. In 1946 her newspaper strip Sazae-San appeared, continuing daily until she retired in 1974. Its simply drawn, humorous panels that are as brief and controlled as haiku, examine the role of women and the problems of life in a changing Japan. Hasegawa's other series are charming, but Sazae-san is seen as her best work. The anime version is the longest-running animated series in the world. Hasegawa died in 1992.

Many young mangaka lodged at Tokyo's Tokiwa apartments. Yet only one of them, Hideko Mizuno, was female. She worked as Tezuka's assistant before making her professional debut in 1956, aged 17. She often used foreign sources as inspiration for her work. *Fire!* (1959) was the first girls' manga with a male protagonist and a sex scene, and her style embraced a new

## The Superflat controversy

How one artist tried to overturn the art establishment refusal to see manga's merits



Pop art meets manga is a good way to sum up the work of Junko Mizuno, including *Princess Mermaid* as seen here.

To Takashi Murakami, modern-day otaku culture, fixated on transient, ephemeral images, was more representative of Japan's present and future than traditional art. Yet he was frustrated by the refusal of the art establishment to consider pop culture products as art. "I thought, 'Why not just revolutionise the concept of art itself?'"

The result was Superflat, an art movement critiquing what Murakami calls "the shallow emptiness of Japanese consumer culture" by exploiting its iconography. An exhibition and book stormed international art markets in 2001. Murakami used the commercial ethos of anime character merchandising to create products for both aesthetes and otaku.

It caused uproar in both worlds. Japan's art elite didn't believe that otaku culture could inspire anything of value. According to critic Hiroaki Azuma, they saw otaku as "anti-social, perverted and selfish people who stick to computers, comics, and anime imagery without any real communication".

Some otaku considered Murakami a cultural tourist or worse. In 2000, a Fujihiko Hosono manga showed a

realism and sensuality. Single motherhood in 1973 slowed her work rate, but she still produces manga and has an active Japanese website.

## Modern girls

CLAMP started as 11 school friends making fan manga in the mid-1980s. Their numbers have dropped to four, sharing all the tasks of manga production. Like Tezuka, they make complex stories and frequently re-use characters from earlier works. Their art style packs in images and influences. It changes depending who's drawing, but most CLAMP works have very detailed hair and costume, sweeping lines and curves that invoke an art nouveau feeling.

Junko Mizuno's work mixes cute, almost child-like images with Gothic horror. Pop art meets girls' manga sums up her visual style. Born in 1973, she's shown herself to be a shrewd businesswoman, with merchandise including collectibles, stationery, T-shirts and even condoms. Her work has

1925

The first girls' manga magazine, *Shojo Club*, is founded. Ippei Okamoto returns from a trip round the world and starts to publish American comics in Japanese.



successful artist strongly resembling Murakami stealing an otaku's ideas.

Perhaps Hosono was thinking of Murakami's workshop, Hiropon Factory, which he set up in 1996. In 2001, Hiropon became KaiKai Kiki Co., stating its aim of developing and fostering young Japanese artists on the international scene. Superflat has brought artists like

Yoshitomo Nara, Chiho Aoshima and Koji Morimoto to international notice. Aoshima's work was exhibited on the London Underground in 2006.



CLAMP's *Chobits* manga has been turned into a anime TV series and a game for consoles and the PC.



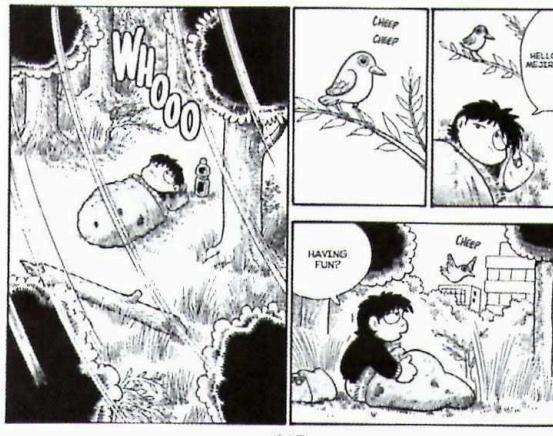
Murakami was the only visual artist in Time magazine's 2008 list of 100 most influential people.

embraced Western icons such as My Little Pony and Spider-Man.

## Boys' own heroes

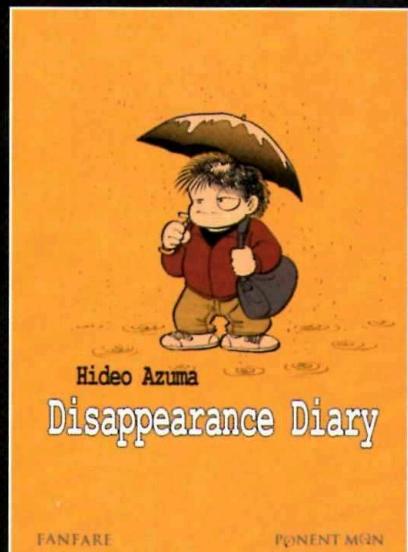
While the counterculture and women's movement blossomed, many artists were still Tezuka-inspired. Tezuka fan Katsuhiro Otomo's manga won the master's admiration, and former Tezuka staffer Rintaro gave Otomo his first job in animation. Go Nagai and Leiji Matsumoto recast the previous generation's fantasies of giant robots and heroes fighting impossible odds.

Nagai started his career as assistant to Tezuka's protégé Shotaro Ishinomori; his greatest innovation is the pilottable transforming robot. Go Nagai says, "Several manga writers of the generation before mine, such as master Osamu Tezuka, created robot stories... reading those stories, I always wondered how to make readers identify with these robot characters. I think I achieved this with Mazinger Z, where a man actually gets inside the robot and pilots it."



017

Homeless and alone in modern Japan, a burnt-out artist faces life outside society in *Disappearance Diary*.



FANFARE

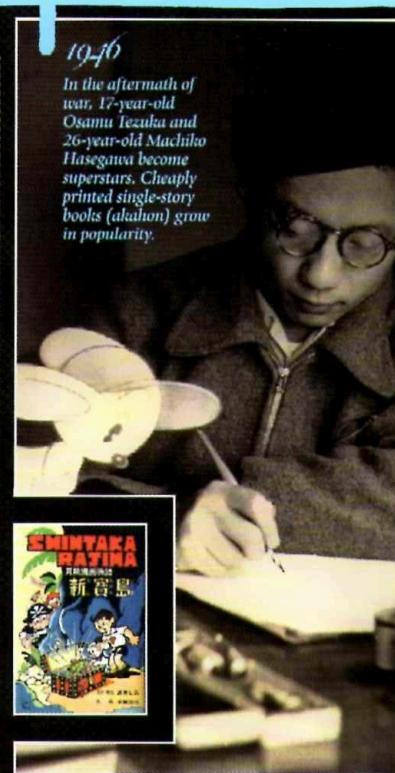
PONENT MON

The contrast between Azuma's rounded, almost childlike art and searing story is very powerful.

Matsumoto's sweeping, heroic sagas were inspired by Tezuka, and by the mythology and reality of the war. He treasures the memory of an early link: "People are connected by strange fates. I watched an animated movie in Akashi called The Spider and the Tulip. It influenced my debut manga, *The Adventures of a Honeybee*. Mr Tezuka saw my work and asked me how it was inspired. When I told him I'd seen The Spider and the Tulip at a young age in Akashi, he choked. He saw it in the same theatre, where it had played for only one week! I remember seeing it on a Sunday – he might have been in my neighbourhood and watched it at the same time. At least, our eyes were glued to the same movie screen. I was five years old then, and Mr Tezuka was 15."

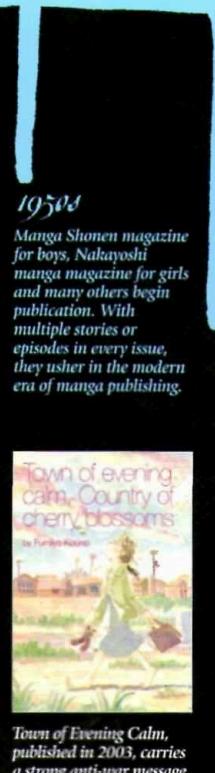
## True-life stories

As time passed, mangaka began to examine the aftermath of the atomic bomb through semi-autobiographical stories. Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen*, published in 1972, is based on surviving Hiroshima's



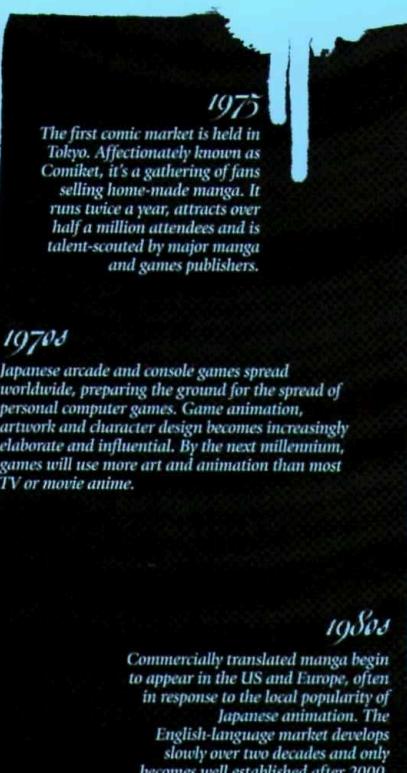
1940

In the aftermath of war, 17-year-old Osamu Tezuka and 26-year-old Machiko Hasegawa become superstars. Cheaply printed single-story books (*akahon*) grow in popularity.



1950s

Manga Shonen magazine for boys, Nakayoshi manga magazine for girls and many others begin publication. With multiple stories or episodes in every issue, they usher in the modern era of manga publishing.

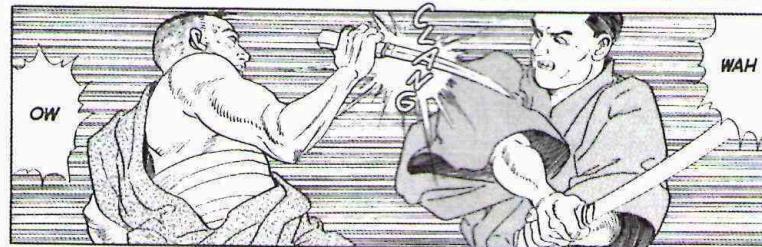


1970s

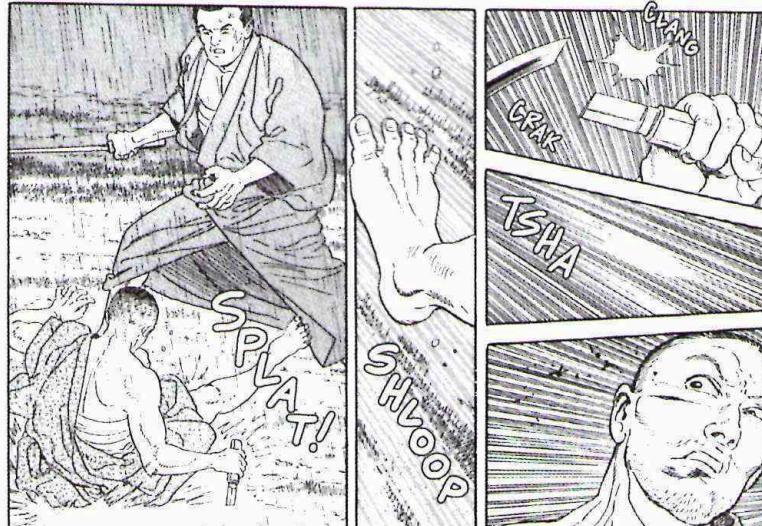
Japanese arcade and console games spread worldwide, preparing the ground for the spread of personal computer games. Game animation, artwork and character design becomes increasingly elaborate and influential. By the next millennium, games will use more art and animation than most TV or movie anime.

1980s

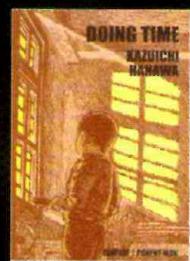
Commercially translated manga begin to appear in the US and Europe, often in response to the local popularity of Japanese animation. The English-language market develops slowly over two decades and only becomes well established after 2000.



Action flows through this cinematic page from *Botchan*, highlighting Jiro Taniguchi's versatility and skills as a storyteller.



106



*Doing Time* highlights the banality and ugliness of Japanese prison life.



Subtle and delicate – the quiet suburban charm of Taniguchi's series *The Walking Man*.

bombing as a child. Half a century later, women like Fumiyo Kono and Yuka Nishioka revisit wartime themes with manga about survivors of the atom bomb.

Meanwhile, Yoichiro Tatsumi and the gekiga movement had inspired a wave of gritty, realistic manga in a wide range of styles. Hideo Azuma's 2005 *Disappearance Dairy* presents the sometimes harrowing story of a burnt-out, alcoholic manga artist and failed suicide who decides to become a tramp in a cute, almost childlike style. Kazuichi Hanawa's *Doing Time*, the story of his stay in a Japanese prison, uses darker, uglier, more intense art. A live action movie appeared in 2002.

## Terms of the trade

Manga is widely translated, but it helps to know about a few of its technical terms

**ANIME** Japanese for animation.

**MANGA** Japanese for comic. The kanji for "man" implies random or involuntary action. Mangaka Shotaro Ishinomori felt this no longer fits modern manga, which has developed beyond gags and grotesques, so he suggested changing it for the "man" kanji meaning "ten thousand" to indicate manga's scope and diversity.

**MANGAKA** Usually translated as manga artist, but implies original authorship. Used for those who create both the art and story, and for artists. Someone who creates the story but not the art is called a gensakusha.

**GEKIGA** Literally "drama pictures", a term coined in or before 1957 by Yoshihiro Tatsumi to indicate a more serious, realistic form of manga. It's been adopted by many young artists.

**KAMISHIBAI** This translates as "paper theatre" and is street-corner storytelling using sequential painted images for illustration. It was popular in the first half of the 20th century but was largely killed off by TV. A number of popular mangaka started out as kamishibai painters.

2001

Manga's influence on art is acknowledged in Takashi Murakami's international art exhibition *Superflat*.

1992

Buchi Terasawa publishes *Takera*, the first manga series that was created entirely in the computer, after more than a decade spent experimenting with digital art.

2009

Shuho Sato launches a website to publish his manga online. In 2010 he opens MangaOnWeb to submissions from other creators.

Jiro Taniguchi started out creating conventional comics, but over time he's developed a subtle, delicate personal style. His art uses clear, simple lines and realistic proportions, and his stories focus on contemporary suburban Japan, taking a wry yet gentle view of society and culture. Many of his pages are pure graphic narrative, entirely wordless.

## Modern manga

Today's manga are as rich and diverse as ever, although we see little of that diversity in the West. Some of Japan's top mangaka are almost unknown here – few have achieved international fame, like Katsuhiro Otomo and Masamune Shirow. Many English-speaking fans are unaware of giants like Moto Hagio and Fujio Akatsuka. But with increasing demand, and feature films based on the work of Naoki Urasawa, Ai Yazawa, Moyoco Anno and others getting Western release, things are changing.

Manga have moved out of their homeland and into world culture. It's world domination, but in a good way. ♦

1985  
Ben Dunn finds Antarctic Press to publish "American Manga" – manga-inspired works created by non-Japanese writers and artists.

1990-91

Katsuhiro Otomo's film of his manga *Akira* is screened in the UK, US and Europe, and creates an adult audience for Japanese animation.

MAMA & <sup>CLASSIC</sup> Rock FESTIVALS PRESENT

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SATURDAY 24 JULY 2010



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Venom



HIGH ON FIRE

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TRANSATLANTIC



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## Issue 53 February 2010



We interview the legend that is Sparth. Thomas Pringle shows how to speed paint like a pro, Jeremy Vickery reveals his colour and light tips, and Daniel Conway shares Painter secrets. Plus, design friendly giants, create a fairy house and ten tips to become a better artist.

## Issue 54 March 2010



This issue's all about pin-up art. Adam Hughes gives his top tips on how to paint some great-looking females, and we look at the history of the art form. Plus, create ZBrush beasts, learn how to paint on the fly, and Painter and Photoshop go head-to-head. Fight!

## Issue 55 April 2010



Discover how to bring legends to life with our guide to painting the creatures of Greek mythology, in our Clash of the Titans special. We also take a good look at Ray Harryhausen's iconic film art, refresh your ZBrush skills and talk to master artist Donato Giancola.

## Issue 56 May 2010



We conjure up 26 amazing beasts for our A-Z of fantasy creatures, and get the lowdown from the artists who painted them. We also reveal how to generate mood in an image, and concept artist Jan Ditlev Christensen demonstrates how to create art with impact.

## FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX



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Learn to paint menacing vampires with Mélanie Delon and Anne Stokes. We review Photoshop CS5, and Drew Struzan explains his process for creating blockbusting movie posters.

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# Sketchbook



## Artist PROFILE

### Veronique Meignaud



Veronique, aka Marmotte, spent two years at Emile Cohl art school, Lyon, where she schooled herself in the ways of digital art. She then became an illustrator and gained over four years' experience in the computer game industry. At the moment she's working as a freelancer in Paris.  
[www.v-meignaud.com](http://www.v-meignaud.com)

## Veronique Meignaud

An uncharted *voyage into the French concept artist's personal ink sketchbook. Hold on tight!*

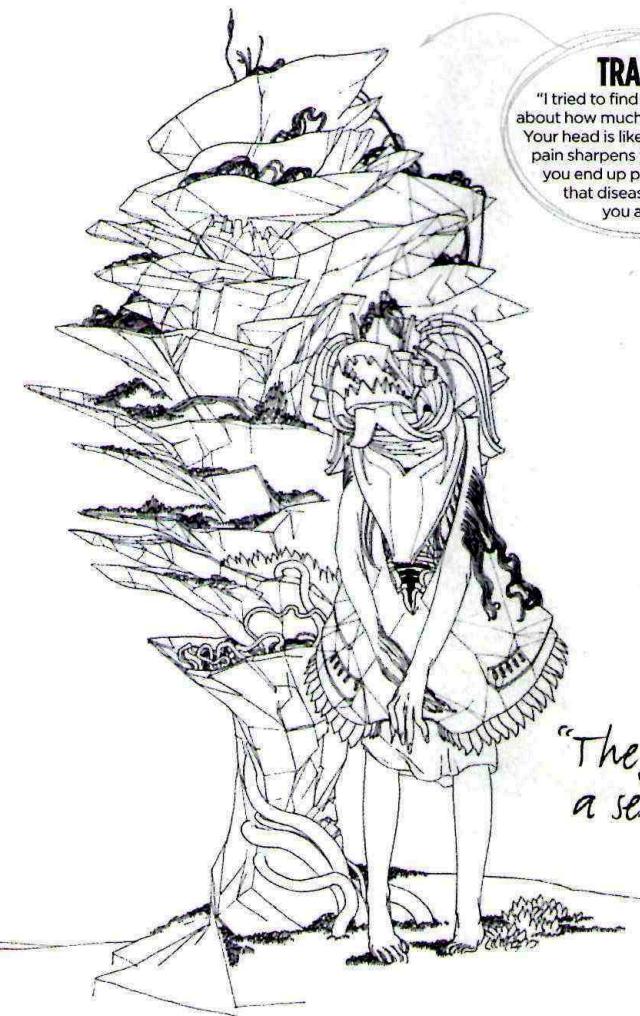
### Hologramme

"A character who's in between a teenager (or child) and an adult. She retains part of her naivety despite the question of losing her virginity. The geometric shape behind her could symbolise a sexual temptation that she tries to ignore..."



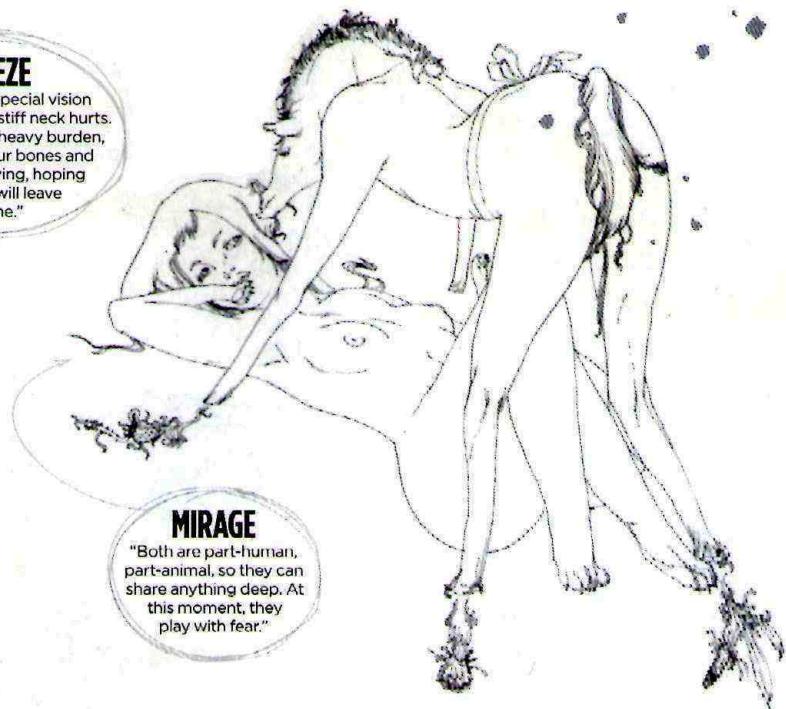
### LAMA

"The chimera (Lama) is the protector of two sweet young people, who are both fragile and need a well-behaved model to keep them moving. They're sick, and a permanent fusion with the chimera is necessary to survive."



**TRAPEZE**

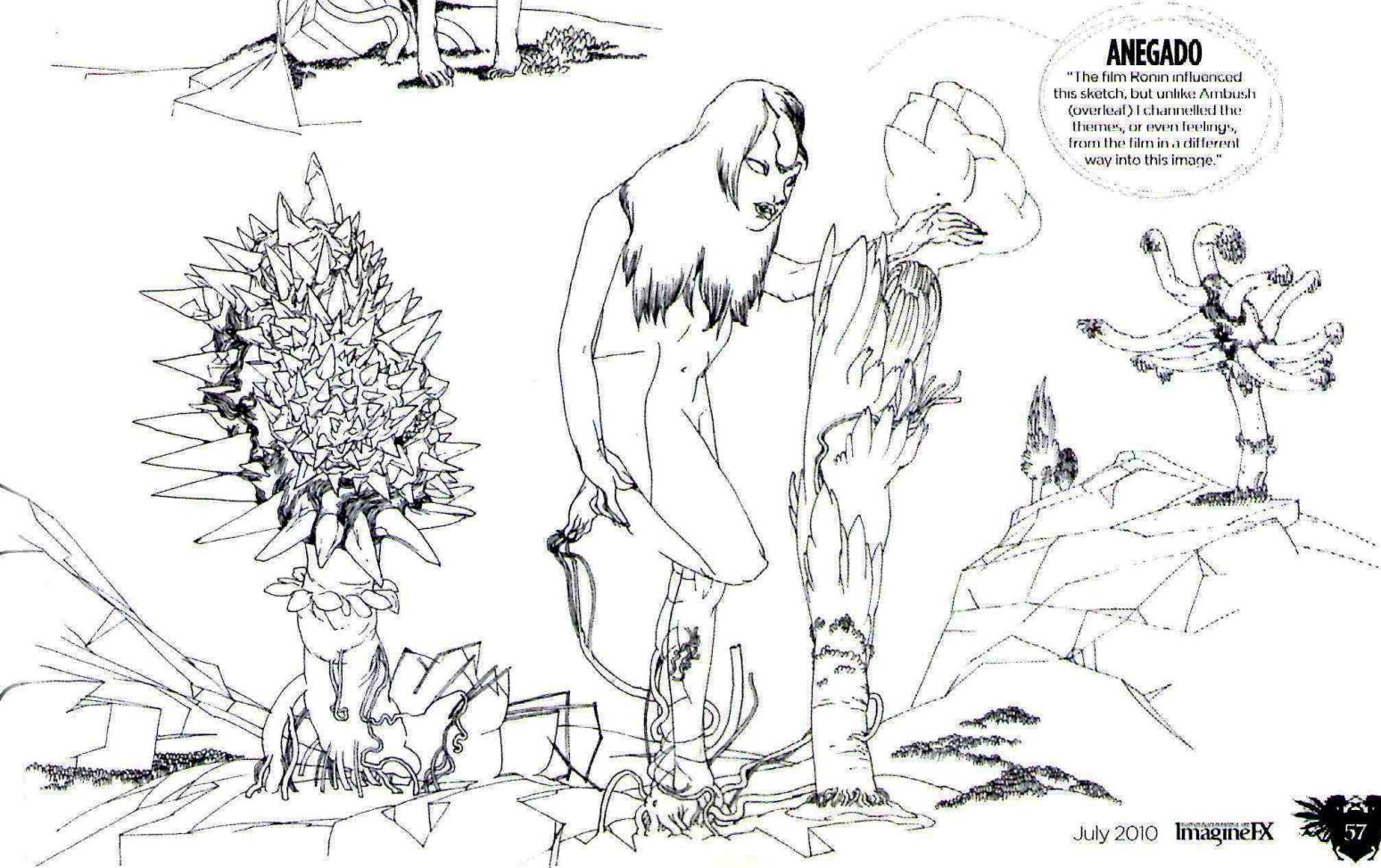
"I tried to find a special vision about how much a stiff neck hurts. Your head is like a heavy burden, pain sharpens your bones and you end up praying, hoping that disease will leave you alone."



**MIRAGE**

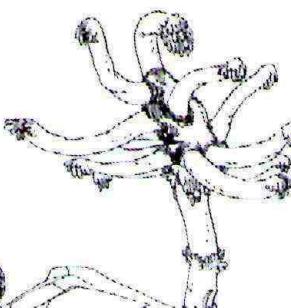
"Both are part-human, part-animal, so they can share anything deep. At this moment, they play with fear."

*"The geometric shape behind her could symbolise a sexual temptation that she tries to ignore..."*



**ANEGADO**

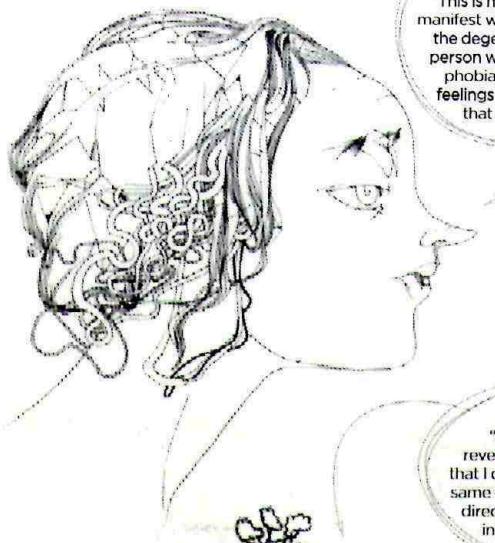
"The film Ronin influenced this sketch, but unlike Ambush (overleaf) I channelled the themes, or even feelings, from the film in a different way into this image."



# Sketchbook

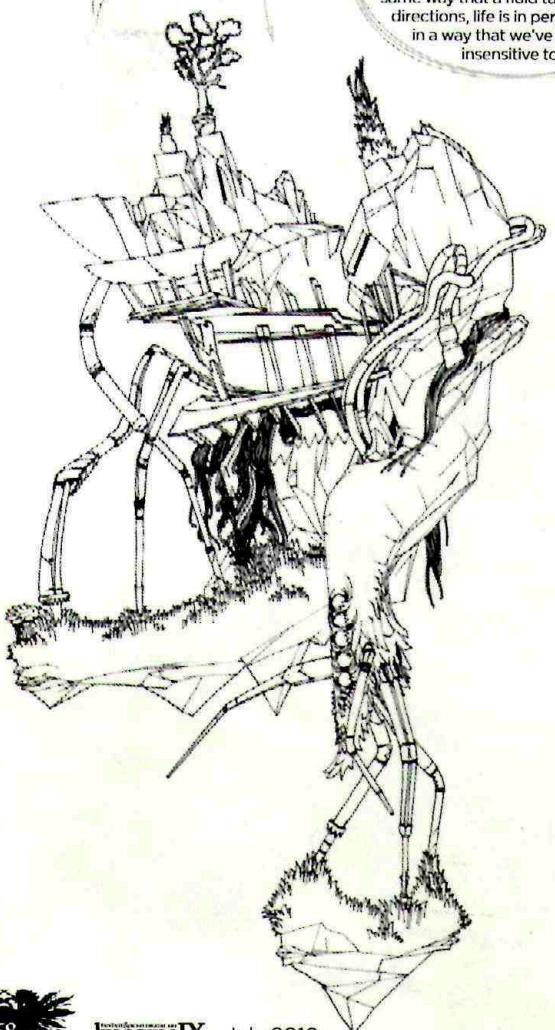
## FRONTO

"This is my fascination manifest when faced with the degeneration of a person who's prone to phobias and bitter feelings - as small as that may be."



## CESAR

"An abstract construction revealing my affective confusion that I often feel when creating. In the same way that a fluid takes different directions, life is in perpetual flow in a way that we've become insensitive to."



## AMBUSH

"Ambush is one of the main themes of Ronin, and as this movie inspired me a lot, I tried to join several themes found in the film in this one sketch. See what you can recognise."





### POUMON

"Is there something annoying you in this drawing? Womens' relationships are as important as mens'. This drawing is a part of a collective project about eroticism that I'm publishing myself."

### ATHABASCA

"A vision of the land named Athabasca, where we can find tar sands, which have kerogen as a component. People actually live in this weird environment!"

"Life is in perpetual flow in a way that we've become insensitive to"

Want to share your sketches? Or know an artist you'd like to see featured in Sketchbook? Then drop us an email at [sketchbook@imaginefx.com](mailto:sketchbook@imaginefx.com), or upload your sketches at [www.imaginefx.com/sketchbook](http://www.imaginefx.com/sketchbook).

# Development sheet

## PROJECT TITLE: STEAMWEST

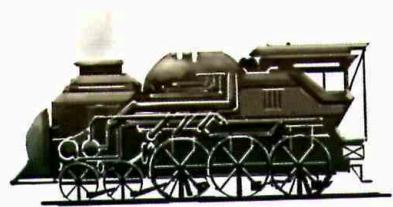
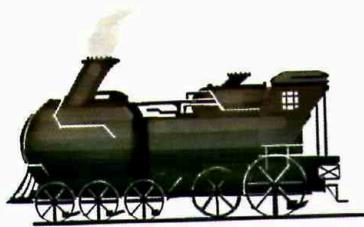
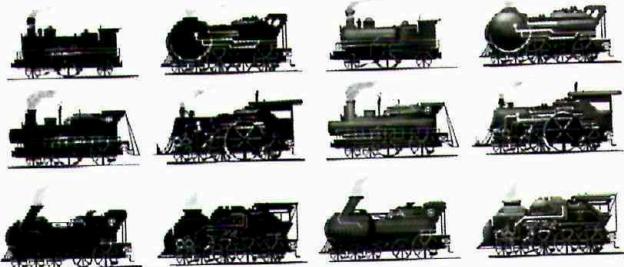
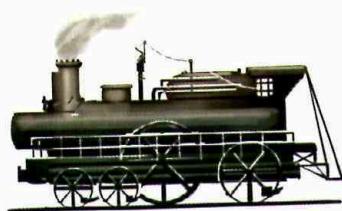
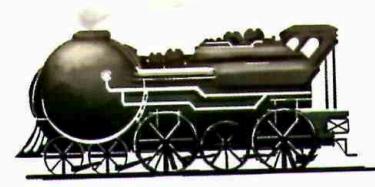
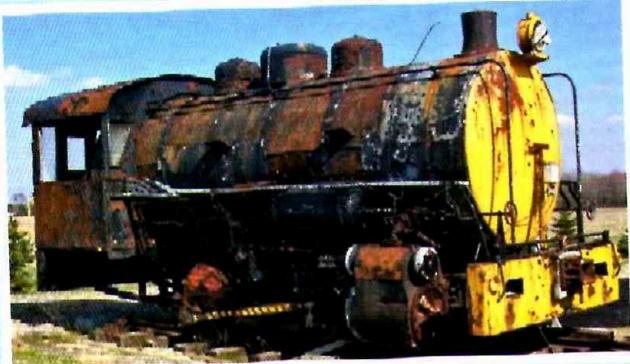
Being a fan of both steampunk and the Wild West inspired Norwegian concept artist **Fredrik Dahl Tyskerud** to create his own unique world called SteamWest, along with a train to ride in it...

### Getting steamy

I've loved the steampunk genre ever since playing Final Fantasy VII. I was looking for a project to do just for fun, and around that time I was also watching Deadwood. Lo and behold, the SteamWest universe was born. My steam train is probably the piece that has had the longest process, seeing as how I didn't know a whole lot about steam locomotives before starting on it. I only knew I wanted one in there, because they're awesome!

### Train spotting

I started out looking at a lot of pictures of steam locomotives. I didn't use any one picture to work from, because I wanted to create a unique design, not something that already exists. I think stuff like this steampunk train has to have a degree of believability, but still look like it belongs in a universe unlike our own.



**Thumbnail fun** After looking at a bunch of trains, I speak to my brother, who's a mechanic and knows how stuff works – I really recommend getting a mechanic brother to advise with designs like this! I then start doing really simple pure black and white shapes, just to flesh out the silhouette. When I have some shapes I like, I throw a Screen layer over them, and add some really quick values. Finally, I use an Overlay layer to add some colour quickly.

## Artist PROFILE

### Fredrik Dahl Tyskerud

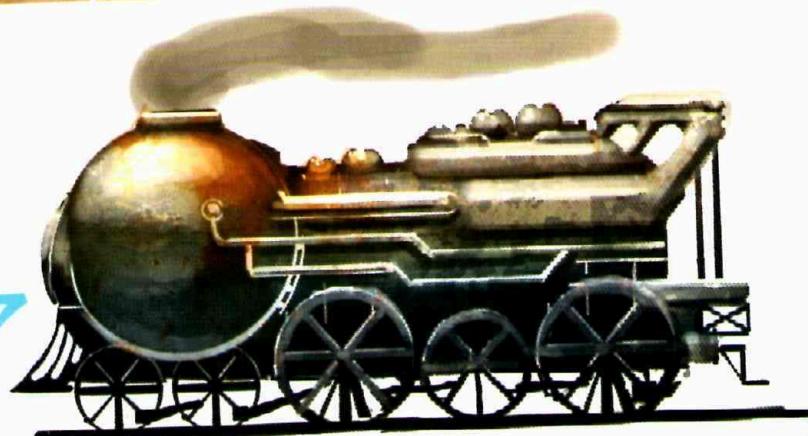
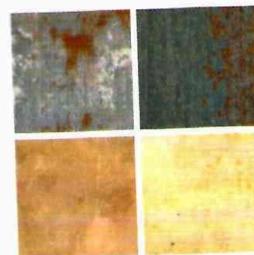
After working as a concept artist for a commercial photographer, Fredrik went freelance to pursue his love of fantasy, sci-fi and steampunk. Initially he created creature designs for film and VFX projects, but is now a lead concept artist developing a point-and-click adventure and illustrating RPG worlds. [www.dcept.com](http://www.dcept.com)



FANTASY & STEAMPUNK ART  
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**Train texture** When I've decided on which thumbnails I like, I enlarge the chosen ones and add detail, some suggestion of texture and more design elements. It's just pushing the thumbnail a bit further really. One of the things I really want featured on the metal in the SteamWest universe is wear and tear, and also rust. I dig what rust does to a metal surface! So I try to give myself hints of that while painting up my two train designs.

**Brush work** I want the rust and wear to be a big part of the design, so I use some custom brushes and texture overlays to get the effect. An important point about texture overlays: paint into it again! Make the texture your own, otherwise it'll look just like what it is – an overlay. Even when using Warp and Liquify, it's hard to get a texture to conform to a shape, so go in there and erase, and paint to make it complement the shape you've overlaid it on.



**Final destination** I decide on the one with the huge round boiler, because that's the design that looks the more unique of the two work-ups I've taken. I've taken two genres and tried to squeeze something new out of them. I try to keep it fresh but recognizable. I want a dramatic perspective, and the fronts of these trains are usually massive and intimidating, and I have the big boiler in the front there, so I want to showcase that.

**Perspective tip** I use a Radial brush to set up the perspective on a separate layer. Clunk the brush down, duplicate the layer, shift it along the horizon and hey presto, two-point perspective! It's best to keep it on a separate layer.

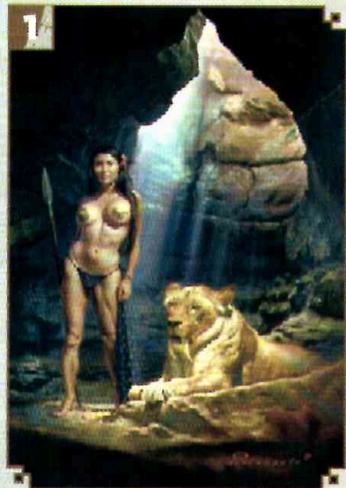
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# EXPosé Traditional

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## Pierangelo Boog

**LOCATION:** Switzerland  
**WEB:** [www.pierangelo-boog.com](http://www.pierangelo-boog.com)  
**CONTACT:** [angelo.boog@sunrise.ch](mailto:angelo.boog@sunrise.ch)  
**MEDIA:** Oils



"I've launched my comeback into fantasy art, having been away from it for a while." Although only producing his fantasy art in his spare time at the moment, Pierangelo plans to publish his classic fantasy imagery in a book at some point. "Publishers, contact me!" he says.

### 1 THE CAVE

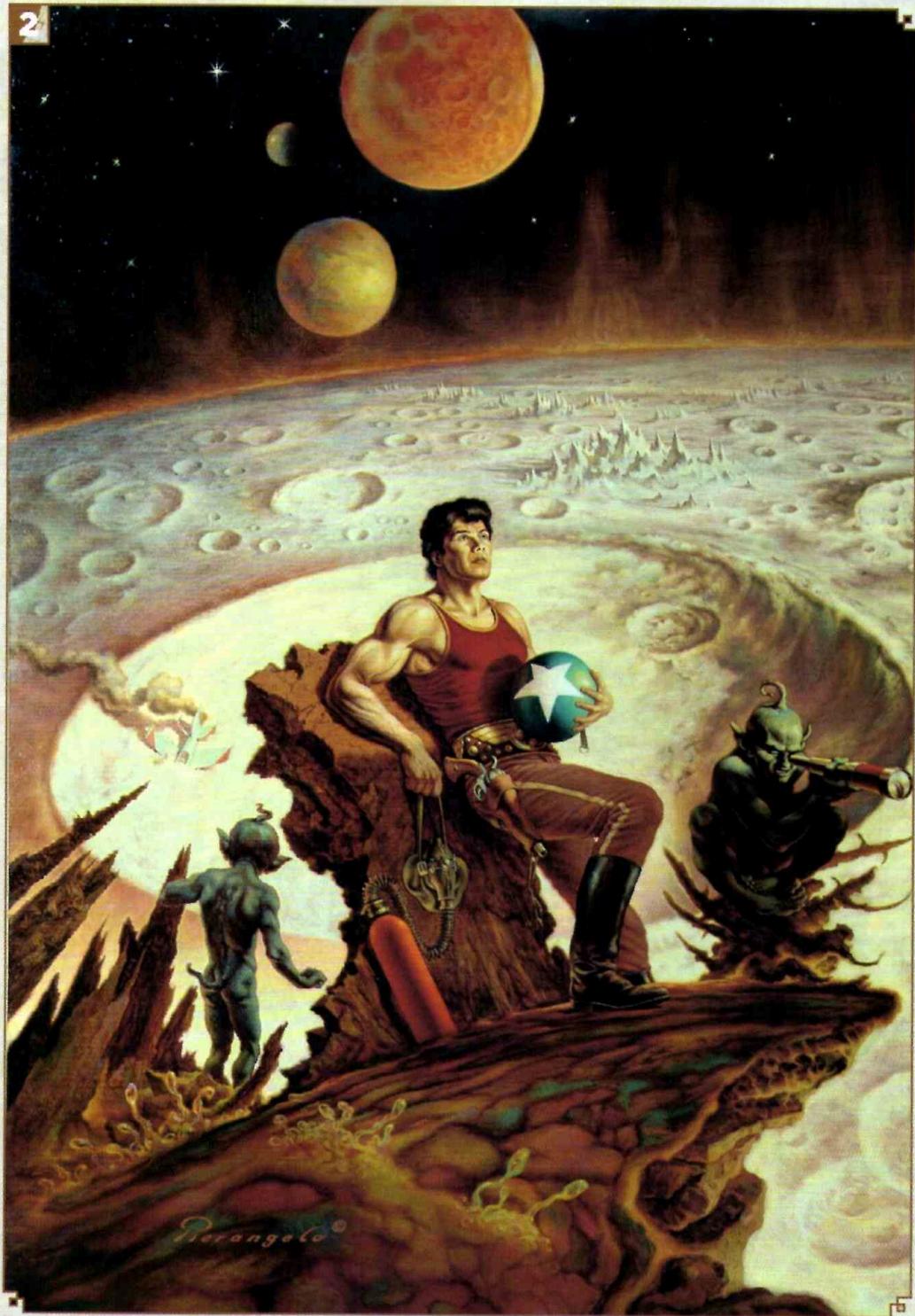
42x55cm, oil on Pavatex  
"I found inspiration for this image in a photo of a zoo lion. It was important to show the scale of the cave and not just focus on another barbarian woman."

### 2 STRANDET

42x55cm, oil on Pavatex  
"The rock is an important element here. The pilot appears relaxed on the rock, looking up into endless space. The Martians are based on figures that I sketched two years ago."

### 3 WHITE HORSE

47x57cm, oil on Pavatex  
"White Horse began life as a pencil sketch that I did 20 years ago. The Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin inspired me when I painted the sky and clouds. In fantasy art it's rare to see a blue sky!"



**IMAGINEFX CRIT**

"Pierangelo's art is a delicious mix of pulp imagery crossed with an expert anatomy lesson. And the scenery is great, too – look at the crater details on the planet's surface." Cliff Hope, Operations Editor

**1 Naoto Hattori**

LOCATION: US

WEB: [www.wwwcomcom.com](http://www.wwwcomcom.com)

EMAIL: [naoto@wwwcomcom.com](mailto:naoto@wwwcomcom.com)

MEDIA: Acrylic on board

Hailing from the Japanese city of Yokohama, Naoto studied graphic design in Tokyo before moving to New York to study at the School of Visual Arts. "I've won many awards and my work has been featured in many art magazines," says a deservedly proud Naoto. "I've been doing exhibitions at many galleries in the US and other countries, and I've also been working on CD covers, snow/skate boards and toy designs."

**1 THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN**

18x14 inches, acrylic on board

"This painting was inspired by Aesop's fable The North Wind and the Sun. I mixed elements of Botticelli's Birth of Venus with it to give it something extra."

**2 WOOD NYMPH**

12x12 inches, acrylic on board

"This painting is my visual expression of Saturnalia, which is one of the most popular Roman festivals. It's a time to eat, drink and be merry."

**3 ANUMODANA**

13x17 inches, acrylic on board

"Anumodana means rejoicing together, as well as approval and encouragement. I put the parody element of Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam, as you can see in the character's hands, to express a giving life-form."

64

ImagineFX July 2010



## IMAGINEFX CRIT



"He may reference European masters, but Naoto's use of colour and sense of mood is all his own. His surreal images have an ominous quality, yet look good enough to eat. Fantasy eye-candy, indeed."  
Beren Neale,  
Staff Writer

## SEND US YOUR ARTWORK!

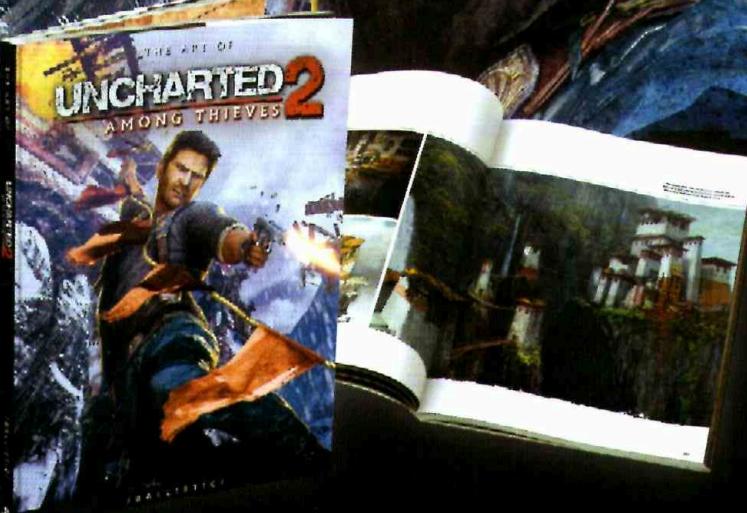
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You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them.  
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# 1 FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Workshops

Advice from the world's best artists



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## This issue:

### 68 Get under the skin of manga

Discover how to draw authentic manga characters with Saejin Oh.

### 74 Paint a dynamic manga character

Chester Ocampo explains how he created this month's stunning cover image.

### 76 Learn the secrets of Japanese art

Sinad Jaruwartjanapat takes you through his creative process, from composition and line art to finishing touches.

### 80 Make the unusual look natural

Simon Dominic demonstrates ArtRage's wide range of natural media brushes.

### 84 Paint an intense monster portrait

Dave Rapoza uses reference photos to create a creature that's grounded in reality.

### 90 Production design for games

Christian Bravery of Leading Light Design explains how to create a lead game character.

### 96 Capture the heat of the moment

Evoke the atmosphere and mood of a fantasy location with Daarken's workshop.

*Artist insight*

# GET UNDER THE SKIN OF MANGA

## Artist PROFILE

Saejin Oh

COUNTRY: Canada



Saejin is a 26-year-old freelance illustrator who works for Udon. He loves creating concept art and character designs. [saejinoh.deviantart.com](http://saejinoh.deviantart.com)

## DVD Assets

 The files you need are on your DVD in the Saejin Oh folder in Workshops.

**Saejin Oh** has some invaluable advice that will help you draw bona fide manga characters

**B**ig eyes, small mouth and fancy hair – this unique style originating from Japan boasts immense popularity from its most loyal fans. People love manga for its fantastic imagination, lovable characters and the quality that can only be defined by the Japanese word "moe". Manga has captivated audiences around the world.

There's just something about manga. It could be the big puppy-dog eyes or the puffy red cheeks, but it's a visual style that makes an instant connection with its viewers. You don't need to know who the character is or where they're from to know you like them. Such emotional connection is difficult to achieve with other styles.

The effect that manga has on people is easy to experience. It's almost impossible to go to a convention without seeing someone cosplaying as Yoko or Cloud, while the artists at their tables hand out posters of their own big-eyed characters. The style is undeniably popular, but how can you draw it effectively?



## 1 THE EYES HAVE IT

Large, shiny eyes are the defining characteristic of a manga character. They go beyond the anatomical capacity of a human skull. The eyeball, if it were real, would be non-spherical and would crush the brain. Yet reality has no place in manga. It's an aesthetic style - an exercise in simplification of the human physique to accentuate what's considered beautiful. Manga characters aren't meant to be real. They're symbols, like an emoticon or smiley. But what does it mean to draw one?

## 2 NOT ALL EYES ARE MADE THE SAME

Few people realise that there are two distinctive styles of manga eye, and the results they achieve are staggeringly different. One is called continuous style, while the other is non-continuous style. Continuous style attempts to exaggerate the eye while obeying the rules of human anatomy; in contrast, non-continuous style completely disregards reality.

Non-continuous style eyes are easily recognisable because the character's upper and lower eyelids are detached from one another. The line that runs around the outside of the eye is therefore disconnected. Both styles have advantages and disadvantages, and recognising these will enable you to draw more effective manga-style characters.

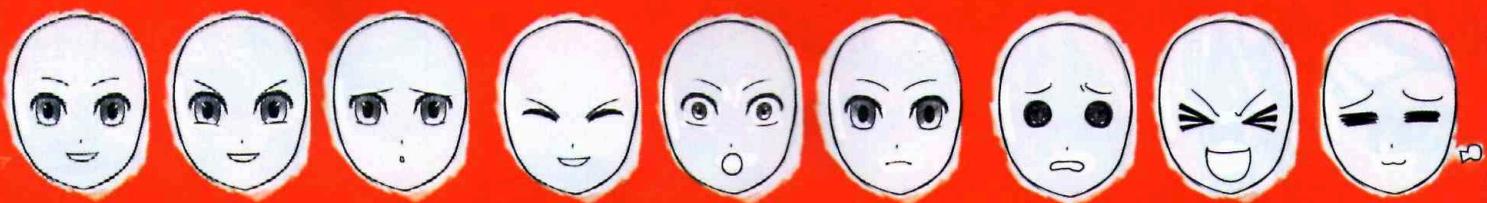


## 3 PROS AND CONS OF THE STYLES

Continuous style looks relatively realistic, but is still aesthetically pleasing. However, you need to know the structure of the eye before you can draw this way. And because you're using relatively realistic proportions, you can't make the eyes too large. Size isn't an issue for non-continuous style because such eyes don't have a fixed dimension. However, non-continuous style is limited to larger eyes and simple facial rendering - it doesn't fare too well with complex painting and shading.



# Workshops



## 4 FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

Manga characters have simplified facial features, but even subtle changes in eyebrow height, eye size and mouth shape will affect the entire mood of the piece.

Manga eyes often don't have much anatomical detail, so artists use shape and size to show expressions. You can

only change the shape so much without a muscular structure to support it. These expressions are so widely used, it's hard to define manga without them.

## 5 ON THE NOSE

Fictional people can't breathe, so what's a nose to a manga character? While reading your favourite manga, you've probably wondered why the nose is so simple. There's no nasal bridge, no nostrils, no bones – just a dot! It sounds strange if you put it like that, but in manga you have to discard unnecessary details for the sake of aesthetics. This is a manga character, not a ZBrush render. When you have so little detail on your character, every position, line and dot is crucial. You can, however, add a realistic nose if you know how to stay within the style.



## 6 CONTINUOUS VS NON-CONTINUOUS

The battle still rages on here. A dot nose is the prime example of a non-continuous style, in that it has no anatomical connection as we've previously described.

The nose is broken off from the rest of the face/facial features and is essentially hovering over the centre of the face, connected only by a colour that resembles flesh. It's a strange way of dealing with reduced details, but it seems to work. A character looks great

with a dot nose and it's difficult to argue with that.

The continuous style, however, adopts a more subtle approach of discarding only the worst-offending details. This style attempts to use nasal bridges and other elements as much as possible, without becoming overly complicated. This style also works brilliantly, but again, it requires a better understanding of anatomy.

It's important to avoid mixing elements, such as continuous style eyes with a non-continuous style nose, and vice versa. You can try it, but you must remind yourself that you're mixing flat 2D style with a full 3D style. They may work in the end, but you might find that you've sacrificed one of the styles without even noticing it.



## 7 LIP SERVICE

When it comes to lips, all that's required to draw an older character is a single line by the mouth. Depending on how they're drawn, lips can turn an innocent character into a mature onnee-san.

Realistic lips are the bane of manga characters' existence. They're simply not made for each other. Manga deals with the problem by treating the whole mouth area as a flat surface. Interestingly, both art styles treat the area in a rather simplistic manner and even a small detail will stick out like a sore thumb. The lips are usually eliminated to harmonise the facial features, but if the character has more dynamic face contours, then bulging lips won't be a problem.

## 8 MAKING MOUTHS

Manga has little to say about the mouth, although it's one of the core details of a manga style face, along with the eyes and nose. A manga mouth is usually nothing more than a single line without any indication of lips, tongue or teeth. It works brilliantly, of course, thanks to the simplified style that goes along with it.

## I AM WOMAN

The manga style is used almost exclusively for androgynous male characters, female characters and children. A man drawn in manga style is just a man. There may be a degree of androgyny in the male character, but you wouldn't notice if someone ported Kratos over to Bleach and gave him some cell-shaded colours. At its heart, manga is an art style for female characters or any character that resembles a female. The males are left with relatively realistic style that's indistinguishable from reality, apart from cell-shaded colours.

Even subtle changes in eyebrow height, eye size and mouth shape will affect the entire mood of the piece

## 10 MODEL SOLUTION

The manga style is easy to break – you must know precisely where your character's eyes, nose and mouth are. However, maintaining consistency becomes difficult as you progress with your character. No doubt you'll soon need to present a range of emotions as you depict them reacting to a certain situation.

There is a straightforward solution, however. You can have a replacement model – a different version of the same character for expressing extreme facial expressions. This frees you from the responsibilities of keeping your character consistent, and also allows for a greater range and depth of behaviours.

There are often different versions of manga characters for certain situations. A serious character, for example, may have a non-continuous style version for comedic scenes. That way, the character can express different emotions while staying within the established style.



ON THE  
DVD

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

### PHOTOSHOP

#### CUSTOM BRUSH: PENCILLER LARGE

This brush mimics the flow of a 4B pencil, so it's perfect for manga line art. My full set of brushes is on the DVD.

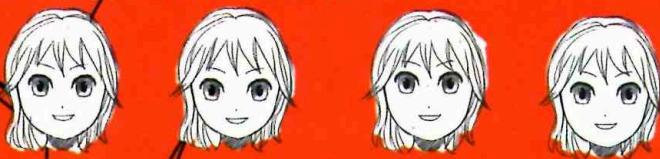
### The end result

So our journey into the world of manga has finally come to an end. We've learned so much here – not only how to draw spheres here and there to recreate something that resembles a manga character, but why those manga characters are the way they are fundamentally.

### 11 LET'S FACE FACTS

Manga characters are fragile and tend to change with the slightest modification. Here, you can see just how drastically a slight change can influence the way a character is perceived.

One of the most important factors determining personality in manga is the relative location of the eyes, nose and mouth on the face. The effect is subtle, but the changes are significant. Unlike western styles, where the characters' features are constantly changed by stretch-and-squash methods, manga has very little tolerance for dynamics. This factor is also key in keeping your characters consistent.



When you have so little detail on your character, every position, line and dot becomes crucial

### 12 LISTEN UP

The neck is important because it connects two different worlds: the face, which is in the realm of manga, and the body, which falls into the realm of reality. It's up to the neck to create harmony between two ways of thinking. As such, it must never be too simple or too real, too thick or too thin. It needs to strike a balance.



You have more freedom with the character's ears. These can often be neglected in favour of more important details, but you can also draw them realistically without affecting your manga character in a significant way, provided you paint or shade them in the same way as the rest of the piece.

### 13 A FATAL FLAW

Manga is a style of specific viewpoints. Front, side, three-quarter and the intermediate angles all work, but there are a few perspectives that the style can't handle on its own. The prime example here is the bottom-up view, where the face disappears and jaw bone determines the facial contours. Manga was never designed with jaw bones or jaw lines in mind and has no answer for this shortcoming, so the artist is forced to bring the character back into the realm of reality. There is, however, a western approach that treats the entire head as a solid shape. This works better for non-continuous style manga.

Manga style is very simple to draw. There are thousands of aspiring manga artists who start their drawings with big eyes and a small nose, but as we've learned in this workshop, there's more to it than that. The style is easy to pick up, but hard to master.

You need to be able to draw something in detail before you can condense it. Manga may be tempting as a quick way into the world of art, but you'll still need to understand human anatomy before you can simplify it. How else will you know if you're doing it right? ☀

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Photoshop

# PAINT A DYNAMIC MANGA CHARACTER

Impressed by this month's cover image? Then find out how

**Chester Ocampo** created it...

## Artist PROFILE

### Chester Ocampo

COUNTRY: Philippines



Chester is a freelance illustrator. He loves Haruki Murakami novels and conspiracy theories, and is on a quest to find the best salmon sashimi in Manila.

[www.chesterocampo.net](http://www.chesterocampo.net)

### DVD Assets

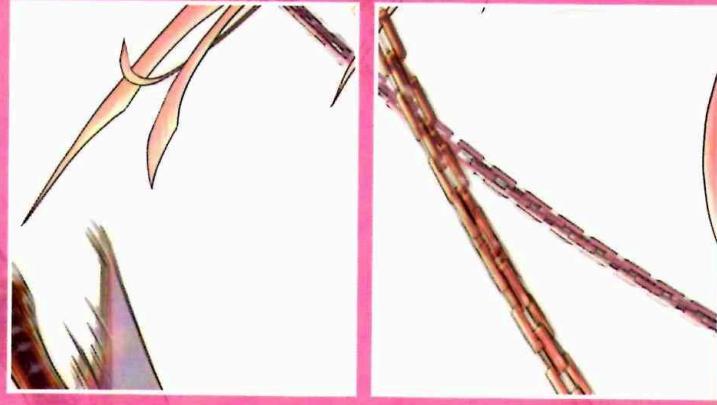
The files you need are on your DVD in the Chester Ocampo folder in Workshops.

This month sees me trying my hand at crafting the face of the magazine: the cover. I was asked to do either an action-oriented or a wholesome character in a manga style. As you can see, I chose the more dynamic option. I was originally asked to paint a double-sized image with the aim of forming a wraparound cover, and although the extra area wasn't needed in the end, I stuck to the original brief.

The front cover image needs enough negative space to take into account the masthead (the ImagineFX logo) and all of the coverlines. There are also the colours of these cover elements to consider. Because it's an action shot on the front of a manga issue, colourful cover elements are par for the course. The trick is not to let the illustration get lost in the background when placed against these elements. Bearing all this in mind, I set out to create the illustration you see here. It was a challenge, but fun, too! ■

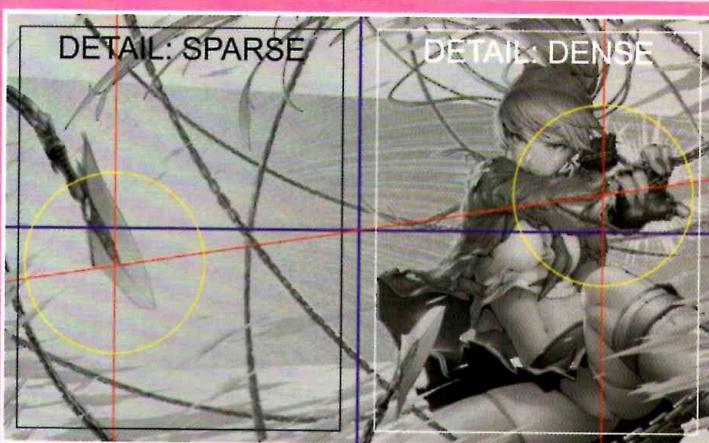
## Indicators of motion

In a manga action shot, motion must be conveyed convincingly for visual impact and energy, and several indicators of motion are seen here. There are high-speed objects such as the chain-whip; wind-affected objects such as the ribbon and the girl's ponytail; objects reacting to motion – notice the jacket's edges, which are fluttering; the particle effects of the dust that's been disturbed by the girl; and the speed lines in the background. All these elements are painted to suggest that they're moving at different speeds.



## DETAIL: SPARSE

## DETAIL: DENSE



## Compositional balance

Composition is a great challenge when it comes to wraparound illustrations. For this image, I used a Yin-Yang balance, where the main point of interest on one side has an equivalent point of interest on the opposite side. And where one side is sparsely detailed, the other side should be dense, to create a more interesting visual flow.

## How I create... A MANGA COVER



### 1 Generating thumbnails

Focusing on composition, I sketch a thumbnail of the wraparound cover. The placement of the character is set to be on the right side of the image, because this is the front cover. The thumbnail is drawn at low resolution for speed; the high-resolution version will come later as the illustration develops.



### 2 Rough sketch

I refine the sketch from the approved thumbnail. Details such as the blades of the chain-whip, the path of the chains and the placement of the character are finalised. The character is moved further to the right so that her head lies on the vertical centre of the front cover for better eye flow, in anticipation of the cover elements.



### 3 Line art and colour flats

Scaling up the image to high resolution, I then digitally ink the lines. I check the thinness and thickness of each line, as well as how lines converge on overlapping objects. Colour flats are then applied on the image. I note their relationship with each other, and their relationship with the cover elements.



#### Check the lighting

To achieve consistent lighting, I create shadow layers set on Multiply and highlight layers set on Linear Dodge, placed under the line art layer but above the object layers. The Shadows and Highlights may look rough at the moment, but more detail can be applied once the object layers and lighting layers are merged together.

#### A sense of depth

Although the final image will be in colour, it helps to convey depth through the line art. Varying line weights creates interesting forms and provide hints on an object's depth. In addition, when objects that are spatially far apart overlap in your view, a gap between converging lines creates depth.

Turn to page 46 to see how manga has developed as an artform in its own right.

Photoshop

# LEARN JAPANESE ART SECRETS



**Sinad Jaruartjanapat** explains the techniques used to develop Japanese-style characters, from line art right through to colouring and shading

## Artist PROFILE

**Sinad Jaruartjanapat**  
COUNTRY: Thailand



Sinad is a 30-year-old illustrator from Bangkok who paints both male and female manga art in Photoshop. [sinad.eguosity.org](http://sinad.eguosity.org)

### DVD Assets

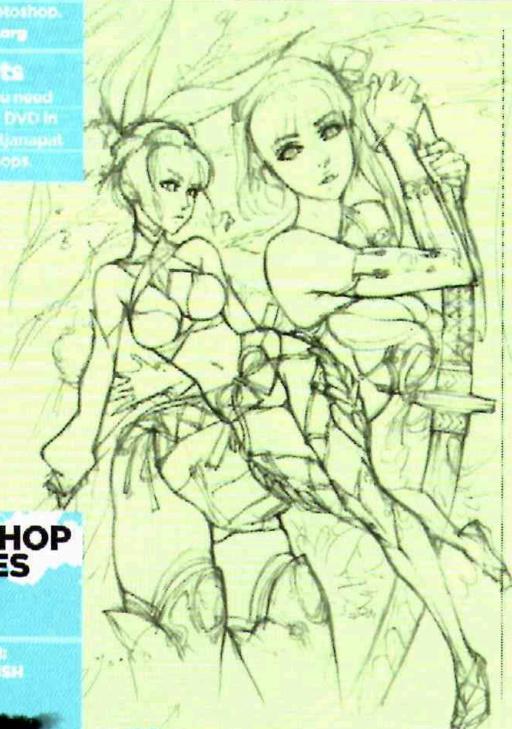
The files you need are on your DVD in the Sinad Jaruartjanapat folder in Workshops.

ON THE DVD

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP  
CUSTOM BRUSH:  
ALL IN ONE BRUSH

I find that this brush, modified from Photoshop's default set, works well when I'm painting my Japanese-style illustrations.



### 1 Create a composition

I need to get a basic idea of what I'm going to draw and what it'll look like. Once I've got that idea, I make a quick sketch to help me decide on a composition. I usually do several sketches and choose the one I think looks most interesting and attractive, and that will suit the image I have in mind. I usually leave the sketches for a while before deciding, which helps me see which parts of the composition I need to improve.

understand this style, we need to get right back to basics.

We'll start by looking at layout and composition, and how they're connected to the story you want to tell. As you'll see, line art isn't just used as a guide for painting in manga illustrations – it's an essential part of the finished image.

Use of colour is also important. It may look simple, but as you'll see, appearances

can be deceiving! In this tutorial you'll also learn the importance of colour theory, and ways of using colour that are exclusive to the Japanese manga style.

This is how I go about drawing and painting manga artwork, from the initial sketch to the line art, to the colouring. I'll give you an insight into the techniques I think are most important for creating Japanese-style illustrations.

### 2 Draw the outline

The most important part of any manga illustration is the outline. You can use an almost infinite number of tools to make your line art come to life and express emotion, but whichever tool you choose, you need experience of using it. Pencils, G-pens (a specially shaped nib held in a wooden shaft) and Chinese brushes are some of the most popular choices. I feel most comfortable with pencil because you can erase mistakes.



### 3 Prepare to add colour

Before I start colouring, I usually make a selection for each character (Select>Save Selection) and save it so I can make adjustments later on. These selections make it easier to work on an image, and are particularly helpful for painting manga illustrations, because this style needs clearly defined areas of colour.

While selections are useful, don't use too many or it won't look natural. For this image, I've only created selections for the two main characters' outlines and skin. Colour the other areas by hand.

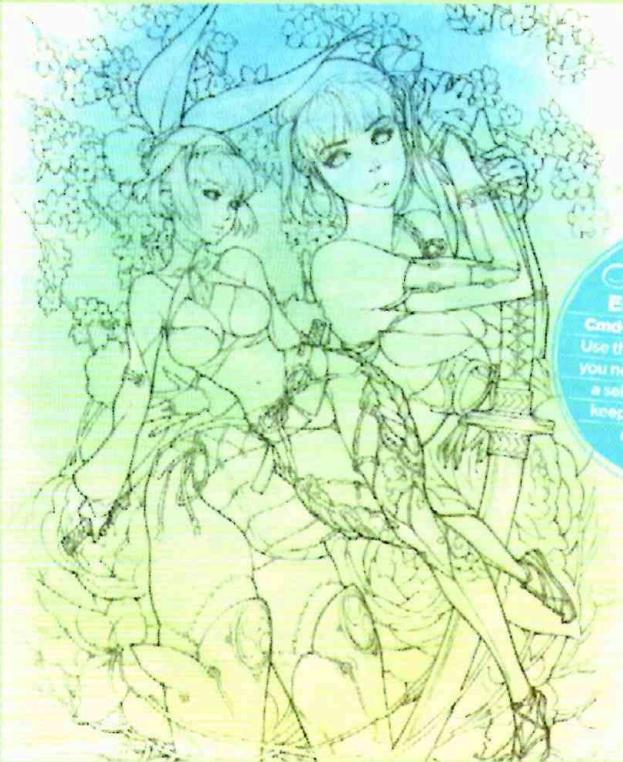




# Workshops

## 4 Use different hues to create shade.

I use colour to control the overall feeling of an image. I like to blend colours with the nearest hue or the opposite hue on the colour wheel to create a feeling of depth. I think this is a better technique than using bright and dark tones of the same colour to create shadows. This colour-blending technique is very popular in Japanese illustration.



## 6 Hair is life

When I'm colouring hair, I always try to create an impression of volume. I don't draw individual strands – I just try to give the impression that the hair is waving in a certain direction. This is a key part of the manga style. Have a look at any Japanese manga comic or cartoon for examples of this.



## 8 Painting skin

While I'm painting the character's skin, I make sure I check some reference pictures. There are two parts to this step, the first of which involves creating a sense of volume. Once I'm satisfied with the shape and lighting, it's time to move on to the second part...



## PRO SECRETS

### Let nature be your guide

Using references from real life or photographs is essential, even if you enjoy drawing like your favourite artists by learning their technique. These will form the base of your illustration and help you solve any problems you encounter with logic. Even if you change your style, what you've learned will stop you getting lost.

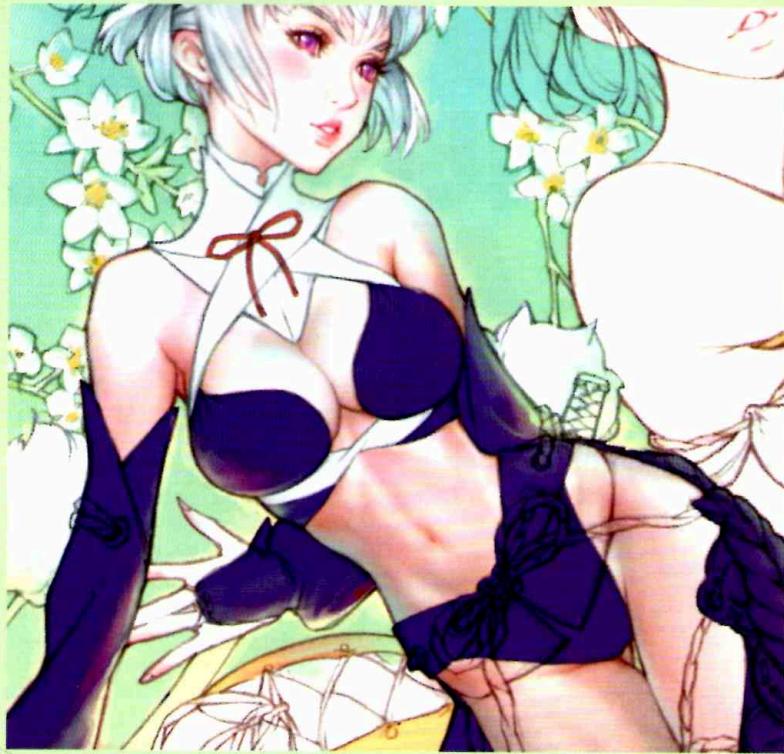


## 5 Choose your character colours

I've added colour fills to my characters to make them jump out of the background as if they were part of a collage. Colour fills help create harmony in the image and provide depth for characters and objects. I erase some colour from the character so the colour fill appears. The amount I need to erase depends on how much I want the character to blend with the background. I might use this technique to blend a character into the background to make another stand out.

## 7 Get rid of the unnecessary detail

Trying to paint realistic detail in this style is forbidden – seriously! The main parts of this character's face are her eyes and cute mouth, so only paint the area between the eyes and eyebrows, and the T-zone. This is enough to draw attention to the eyes and mouth and show that this is a person's face. Don't add more detail than you need to, because doing so will spoil the image.



## PRO SECRETS

### Keep it simple

Adding too many details and light sources to images can suffocate them. How do you know when to stop? Ask yourself what you're trying to say in your work. What do you want the viewer to see first? This will tell you what to focus on. Once you've found your focal point, you can add the details to strengthen it. Eventually, you'll know when to stop.

## 9 Adjust the shading

At this point I look at the image as a whole and decide if I need to adjust any shading. I often add a little more colour to areas that need it to create a sense of depth. Another technique I like is adding a little of the background colour to parts of the skin that are in shadow. This could come from the opposite direction to the main light source. I apply these techniques on separate layers so I can adjust them later.



## 10 Let the line art shine

Focus on refining the shadows and make sure they're large enough to create an impression of volume. Don't worry too much about the smaller details, such as the girls' accessories – the line art will give these depth. In my opinion, too much shading in a tiny space can make the image look heavy.

## 11 No competition

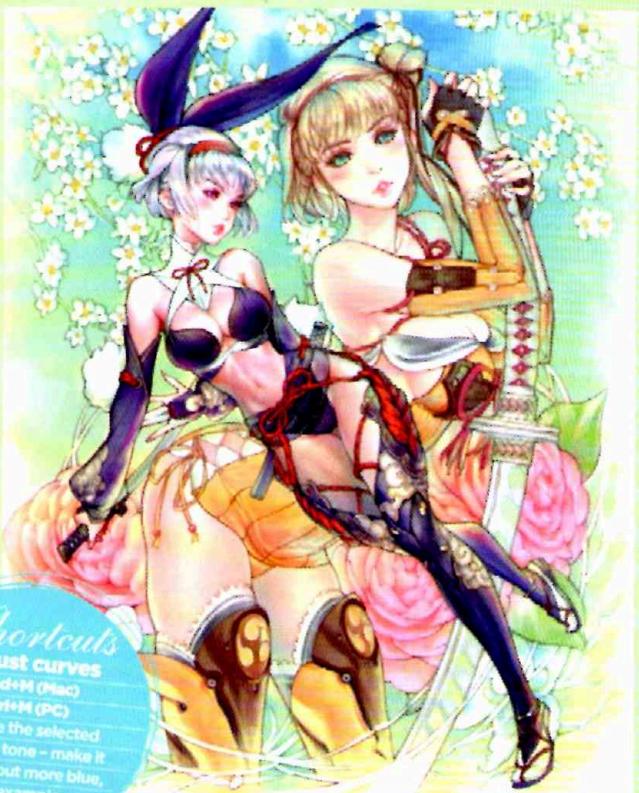
Now it's time to paint the second girl. I use slightly brighter colours to make her blend into the background, because I don't want her to compete with the foreground character. Anyone looking at the picture should see the front girl first.

## 12 Create depth

Now I've got all the detail I need, it's time to create depth by erasing some colour from the main character. This is the same technique I used to add a little background colour to the shaded areas.

## 13 Final adjustments

It's hard to decide what I need to adjust in the final step to make the image look exactly the way I want. I've been working on the painting for a while, which can make me too familiar with it, so I try to get it out of my sight. When I return to it later, I can see what needs adjusting. This is the same technique I used with the initial sketch.



### Shortcuts

#### Adjust curves

Cmd+M (Mac)

Ctrl+M (PC)

Change the selected colour's tone – make it less red but more blue, for example.



*ArtRage*

# MAKE THE UNUSUAL LOOK NATURAL

**Simon Dominic** believes the sight of an ogre grabbing a meaty cow can only be done justice by ArtRage's equally meaty natural media simulation

**Artist PROFILE**  
**Simon Dominic**  
COUNTRY: England



Simon's a self-taught professional illustrator who specialises in fantasy, horror and the plain weird. He's worked on game card art, book covers and illustration and magazine articles. [www.painterly.co.uk](http://www.painterly.co.uk)

**DVD Assets**  
The files you need are on your DVD in the Simon Dominic folder in Workshops.  
**SOFTWARE:** ArtRage 3 (trial version)



## 1 Create a Samples palette

Before I start, I want to get a colour palette sorted out. On the default canvas, I use an Oil brush (called Medium Oils) and dab on some colours representing the main elements of my image – ogre, cow, rock and sky. I then sample each colour in turn using Alt+click, and choose Add Local Sample to add it to the Samples panel. When they're all done, I order my samples by luminance (value). The palette is limited in terms of hue, but has a full range of value and saturation.

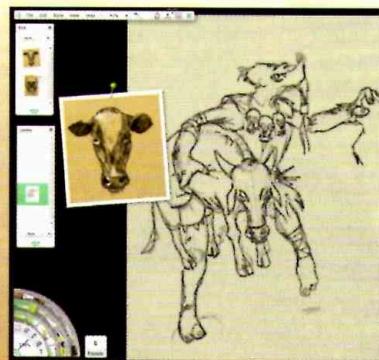
**A**rtRage is a compact but surprisingly powerful tool for simulating real media sketching and painting, helped along in no small part by its uniquely impressive brush engine. In this workshop I'll explain how I tackle the artwork creation process, from colour palette setup through the sketching stage to the simulated oil painting and detail stages. I'll demonstrate how building a

limited colour palette helps the overall colour consistency, and how working from a reasonably detailed sketch can eliminate the need for late changes.

Working in ArtRage is subtly different from other packages. Its implementation of the painting process, through replication of the real-life behaviour of various media, means that artwork creation is reliant more on traditional techniques than digital ones. That's not to

say I won't be using methods not found in traditional art – far from it. ArtRage's implementation of references, layer transformations and selection masking are well implemented and I'll show you how they can be employed to good effect.

As far as the subject matter goes, I suspect most readers would be eager to see an ogre carrying a cow (I know I was) so that's what I went with. If you were expecting a goat, I can only apologise.



## 2 Get started

I start with a small canvas, about a quarter of the size of my final piece. I use a relatively smooth texture, so that the pencil lines aren't excessively grainy. ArtRage enables you to change the canvas texture at any time, so you're not stuck with your initial choice. I also load my reference images into the Refs panel. I'll be using two references – both sketches I did earlier – one for the cow's head and another for the ogre's skull necklace.

## 3 Rough sketch

For sketching, I select the Pencil tool set to High Pressure, Average Softness and Zero Tilt Angle. I sketch onto a new layer – the reason for this will become clear later. It's vital to use solid black for all the pencil lines, or problems will show up when it comes to the underpainting. I can play about with the size and angle of the sketch by selecting the Layer Properties in the Layers panel and choosing Transform Layer Contents. ➤

# In depth Painting the unusual



# Workshops



## 4 Outline sketch

When I've finished the rough sketch, I set that layer to around 40 per cent opacity. I create a new layer on top and, using the rough sketch as reference, create a more refined outline sketch. When this is done, I delete the rough sketch layer. There's nothing to stop you sketching everything onto a single layer, or even onto the canvas, but this way allows for refinement without the mess.



## 5 Final sketch

This sketch will form the basis for the painting. First I upscale the canvas and layers by 200 per cent using *Edit > Resize the Painting*. For the sketch I set the outline sketch layer to low opacity, create a new layer for the final sketch and use the outline sketch as reference. Notice that I'm applying shading to the final sketch as a basic value study, which defines the light and shadow for my characters. From this point on I need to consider the direction and strength of my light sources.



## 6 Add an environment

I don't need the same level of detail here as on the ogre or cow, so I use the Crayon tool. I then delete the outline reference sketch, so that I end up with a single layer containing my final sketch and the blank canvas below it. I haven't spent too much time on sketching detail – just enough so that I don't have to start thinking about adding or changing important elements at the painting stage.



## 7 Underpainting

Because I'm using layers at this early stage, the term underpainting takes on a more literal meaning. I create a new layer between the canvas and the sketch layer. Using my Underpaint brush, which is an Oil Brush with low pressure and lots of thinners, I cover the painting with a thin wash of colour, while retaining the lines and shading from the sketch. I don't worry about picking the exact colour, rather I choose quickly from the Samples panel and use a large brush to apply it to the underpainting layer. My aim is to create a colour guide, which will be useful later on.



## 8 Paint rough detail

I'm ready to start painting, so I merge all layers with the canvas and upscale to the final dimensions. For most of the painting process I'll use my Medium Oils brush. I also make sure the *Tools > Color Options > Real Color Blending* menu item is checked, because this gives more realistic paint mixing results. I zoom in to 100 per cent and start with the focus of the piece: the ogre's head. Wherever possible, I select my colours from the Samples panel, or pick them from paint I've already laid down. This ensures consistency and enables me to remain true to my initial colour concept.



## 9 Canvas texture

To make the image resemble traditional media, I roughen the canvas texture. I click the Properties icon on the canvas layer in the Layers panel and choose *Edit Layer Texture*. I uncheck *Use Canvas Texture* and bump up the *Roughness* to around 70 per cent. This applies only to new paint strokes.

## 10 Cow pattern!

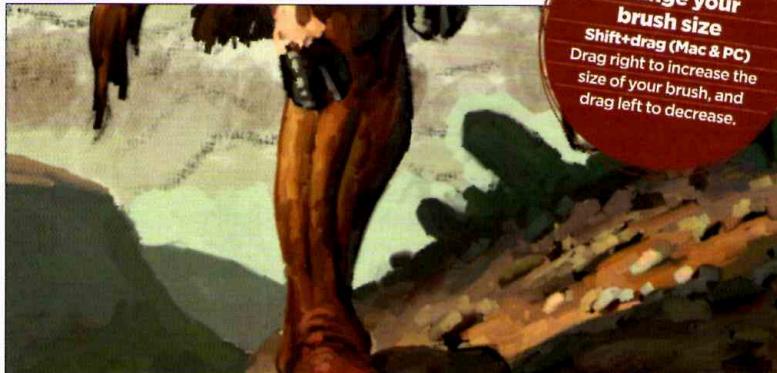
Every good cow has a cow pattern, and this one's dominated by chocolate splodges. I create a new layer, set it to *Darken* mode and decrease the opacity to 75 per cent. Using dark colours picked from the Samples panel, I can now pattern my cow. The Eraser tool is useful at this stage for removing overspill and spicing up the pattern boundaries. When my cow's looking suitably sexy, I merge the pattern layer with the canvas.



## 11 Rocks

I intend my image to be light-hearted and slightly stylised, so I don't use reference for my rocks. Still using my Medium Oils brush, I apply varying colour hues and values to depict the rock form. Always bear in mind where the light's coming from, otherwise the form is lost. On the shaded side of the rock, I sometimes lower the colour saturation to simulate diffuse light coming from the pale sky. These rocks are rugged, so at this stage, which is adding rough detail, I keep my brush strokes pretty chunky.

# In depth Painting the unusual



## 12 Simulating depth

To give the impression of depth I've added a bit of atmospheric haze. Broadly speaking, the easiest way to portray this is to remember that the further away an object is from the viewer, the closer its colour resembles that of the sky. In ArtRage, you can mix colours dynamically on the canvas to achieve this. I sampled a dark foreground colour and mixed it with the sky colour in order to paint the mid-distant hill. I followed the same process for the far hill, adding more sky colour to the mix.



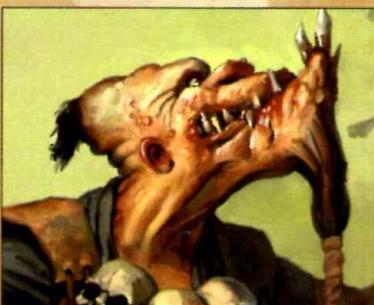
## 13 Fluffy clouds

For the clouds I use a much larger brush than for the ogre's face. Not only does this speed up workflow, but it gives a pleasing variety to the brush strokes on an image. When using Oil Brush types in ArtRage, I toggle the Square Head option in the Settings panel. Unchecking this brings the brush to a point as you apply less pressure, and is therefore good for small detail. I keep the Square Head option checked for the rough details stages.



## 14 Paint planet curves

I use the Selection tool to help me paint a smooth curve. I choose Settings> Ellipse type and Shift+drag to create a circular selection. I then move the selection to my desired place, and using the Medium Oils brush, add colour to represent the planet boundary. To create a red glow around the rightmost planet, I use Edit>Invert Selection and dab red paint at the perimeter. I then remove the selections using Edit>Deselect All.



## 15 Fine detail

Adding fine detail involves the same process as rough detail, except that I decrease my brush size and make sure the Square Head option is unchecked. I vary the settings on my brushes for subtly different effects. For delicate, low-impact details, I reduce the loading setting to two or three per cent, so that the resulting stroke blends almost immediately with existing, thicker paint.

## 16 Tidy the Pods

At this stage, I've finished with the Refs and Layers panels so I can close them. When I do this, they minimise to Pods in the corner of the workspace. I can remove the Pods themselves by going to View>Pods and unchecking the relevant ones. ArtRage also enables you to toggle all menu and panel visibility by right-clicking your pen and touching the canvas, or by pressing Return.



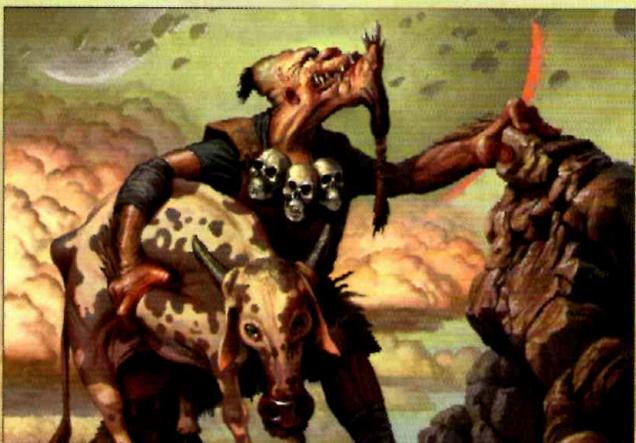
## 17 Blend wet paint

If the paint is sufficiently thick, ArtRage enables you to blend and smear it. I use Blend on the cow and the clouds, through use of the Wet type Palette Knife. I'm careful not to blend too much, because this would make the result blurred and digital-looking. So I don't touch any of the boundaries between colour hues or values, to leave them sharp.



## 18 Finalise the rock texture

As well as going over the rock with a smaller brush, I emphasise the edges that are lit directly by the sun. I do this by highlighting them with a bright colour. This has the effect of making the form of the rock look more solid.

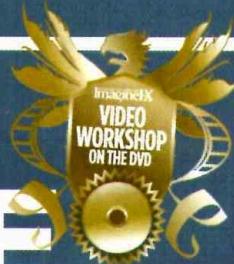


## 19 The finishing touches

I revisit every part of the image and tidy up any loose ends. It's a good time to add a few final highlights and for this, I reduce the Thinners on the Oil Brush Settings panel, which creates a slight impasto look. There's no need for colour correction in this case, although you can do so by using Edit>Adjust Layer Colours. Finally, I leave the image for a few hours and come back to it one last time, just to make sure that I haven't overlooked anything.

Photoshop

# PAINT AN INTENSE MONSTER PORTRAIT



Sometimes the best reference sources are staring you in the face. Here, a powerful fantasy creature is painted by **Dave Rapoza**, based on himself

**I**'ve always been a fan of artists who could render realistic monsters. So when I got serious about art, one of my goals was to bring my own creatures to life. A lot of people who are starting out tend just to pull information from their heads and forget how crucial research is. All my creatures are grounded in reality, which is important when you're working

on unreal creatures. You need to have a good understanding of the fundamentals to bring your ideas to life successfully.

I'll explain how I light and pose my character, and create movement. When I'm working on a piece like this, I collect reference materials and keep a mirror nearby. It's crucial that I introduce life into my characters, and if I'm ever stuck on something, I try to solve the problem



## 1 Exaggerated gestures

To kick things off I sketch out a general idea on paper. I use pens to create really fast lines and exaggerate the gesture to produce movement. I want this guy to be twisting around and screaming over his shoulder. I'm inspired by the cover of the Scorpions' album *Blackout*, and want to pay tribute to this awesome record. Most of my artwork starts in this way – I try to let all my interests influence my images.



## 2 Dropping shadows

Now that I've got a sketch I can work on the colour thumbnail. At this point I'm not worried about nailing the anatomy, just about establishing a mood and making the image full of action. The face has to be the focus, so I'm going to pop it out from the background with some backlighting. I also drop some grey tones on the background using Multiply layers and use the Soft Round brush with the Eraser to rub out the highlights.

immediately. So if I'm having trouble with teeth, I go and get some reference, rather than just fiddling around. If you've never done a study of teeth, chances are you won't be able to pull them from your imagination. I don't mean you should follow reference sources completely. Instead, study from life and then memorise how the things look, so you're less likely to run into trouble later on.

## Artist PROFILE

**Dave Rapoza**  
COUNTRY: US



Dave is a full-time freelance artist. He spent a lot of time drawing while he was growing up, but only started taking it seriously a few years ago.  
[www.daverapoza.com](http://www.daverapoza.com)

## DVD Assets

The files you need are on your DVD in the **Dave Rapoza** folder in Workshops.

## ON THE DVD

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

### PHOTOSHOP

#### DEFAULT BRUSHES: HARD AND SOFT ROUND



I've mainly been using the Hard Round and Soft Round lately. I find it most effective to learn how textures actually work before you go in and try to imply them.



## 3 Adding colour

The lighting looks about right, so it's time to add colour. I'll usually use Color layers for the flat tones, such as skin and background. Then I add more lighting from the backlight and the light from the upper left on his face. I do this by dropping in Overlays using a Soft Round brush set to 10 per cent Opacity. I decide on a blue/orange complementary colour scheme to separate the character from the background.

In depth Paint a monster portrait



# Workshops

## 4 Establish the lighting

Next, I do some rendering. The main thing I want to do is further establish my lighting. I use overlays to pop some highlights and normal layers using various Hard and Soft brushes to blend the tones I've laid down. To add more character and motion, I add some particle effects and spit flying around. I also decide to surround the creature with fog, to spread out the backlighting and help define his form.



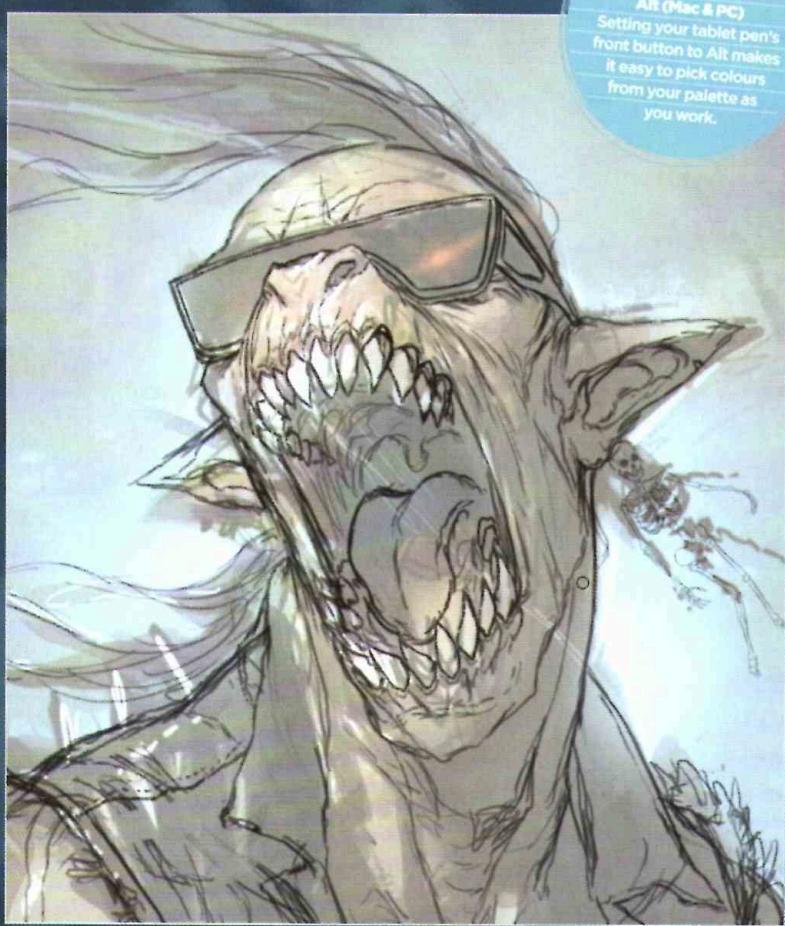
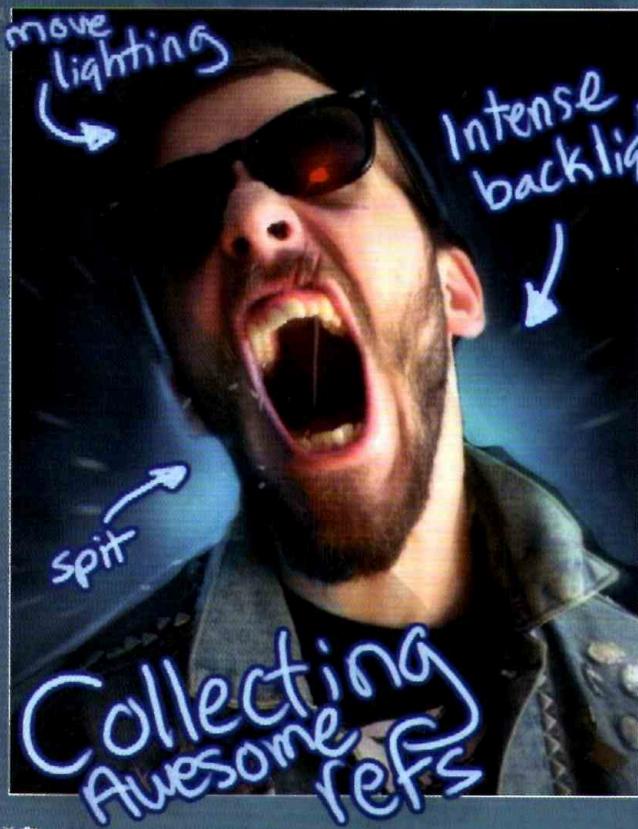
## 5 Finishing the thumbnail

I decide that the background really needs to be blue – almost neon, even. So I use a Colour Balance Adjustment layer to boost the blue in the highlights and the red and yellow in the shadow. I also use a Levels Adjustment Layer to increase the lights and darks. After that I bump up the orange light hitting his face with another Overlay layer. I then drop in a nice red gleam.



## 6 Pose for reference

Before I start on the final piece, I grab my mirror and take some photographs of myself in a pose that's similar to my character's. I won't follow the reference fully – it's just something to glance at to achieve the right intensity in the painting itself.



**Shortcuts**  
**Colour picker**  
Alt (Mac & PC)  
Setting your tablet pen's front button to Alt makes it easy to pick colours from your palette as you work.

## 7 Final line work

I create a new layer, fill it with white and turn the layer opacity down to about 40 per cent, keeping my colour thumbnail on a layer beneath. Then I create another layer on top of the white and using a basic Hard Round brush I draw in the final lines, making adjustments for proportions. Then I put another layer beneath the line layer and turn the white layer opacity to 100 per cent.

## 8 Thumbnail colours

Selecting the colours from my thumbnail, I fill in each tone on separate layers. This way, I can make new Clipping Mask layers with each, and colour within the filled space. I go with the orange and blue complementary tones: this creates contrast and enables me to pop the character out from the background.



## 9 Shadows and highlights

Using the tones from my colour thumbnail, I block in my shadows and highlights. I use Soft Light layers for the highlights and shadows. To stay within the lines, I create a new layer using the Layer Clipping Mask option. Since the colours are on different layers, I can muddy up the background without affecting the foreground. After dropping a texture above the background, I change the layer type to Soft Light and adjust the opacity.



# In depth Paint a monster portrait



## Add impact

I need to give the image the same impact that the thumbnail had. I tend to do quick thumbnails first because I want to know where I'm heading. This way, I can quickly establish the mood, colours and idea before I get overwhelmed. Then it's just a matter of getting the final image to a similar level. I sample tones from my thumbnail and add them to the image. I use a Hard Round brush with Pen Pressure turned on for the rendering.



## Getting references

I start collecting reference images. So far, I've just posed in the mirror and taken a photo. Now I'm going to render a denim jacket and a bodybuilder. I model a denim jacket myself, but for everything else I turn to the internet. I really want to get the texture down, so I use a texture brush for the denim. I darken the background to make the figure pop out even more using Multiply Layers set to low opacity (sampling tones from the image) and reflect the backlighting on the character's skin.



## Details and movement

It's important to establish your big shapes and colours before you get into detail. I start adding some scars above the teeth, as well as his hair. Starting to get into the movement of the piece, I want his hair and the spit to be blowing around. At this point, I'm still adjusting to the contrast. I add another Multiply layer to the cast shadow on his body in an attempt to make his face stand out more.



## Assess the piece

I regularly flip the canvas horizontally so that I can see my mistakes. If you don't, you become accustomed to looking at it a certain way and lose sight of the problems. I also rethink where the image is heading, because I don't feel that it's particularly interesting. I decide he needs patches and pins on the jacket, which should also be more frayed. The teeth need adjusting too, and he could do with more scars and tattoos. I'm not sure what I'll stick with, but this adds character.

## PRO SECRETS

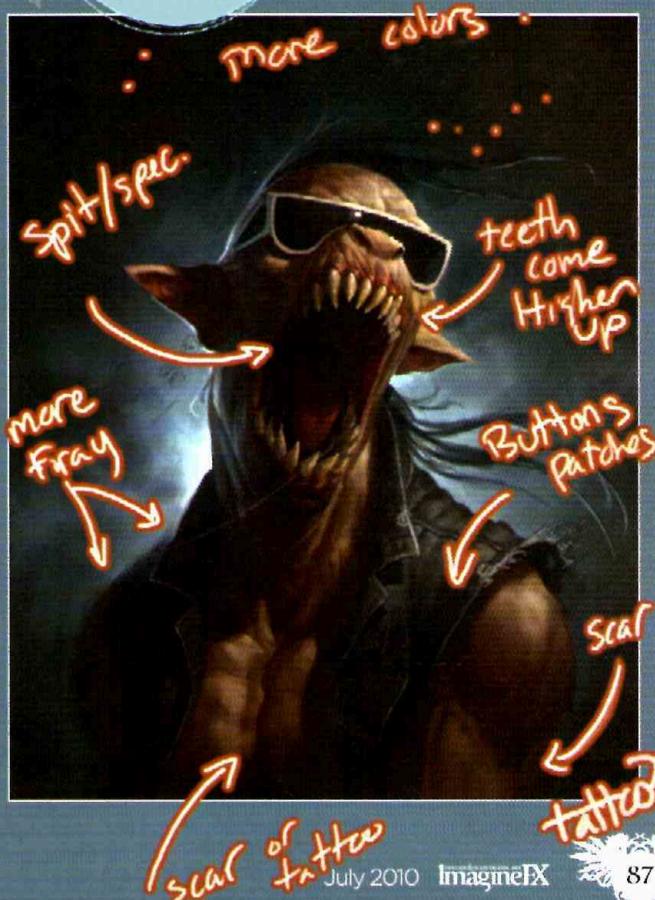
### The rules of composition

Never forget that there are solid guides to help you nail compositions. The Rule of Thirds states that you should divide images into three horizontal and vertical sections. Where the intersecting lines cross are the points of interest. Also remember the Golden Rule, the Triangle, Radii, Cross and so on. These will help to sell your images and if you're just placing your characters and focal points in random places, you're missing out.



## Follow the reference

At this point, I'm sticking to my references and my knowledge of lighting to render the face and jacket. While I'm working on this, I look at myself in the mirror to see how light reflects off my tongue. I also start on his skeleton earring. I've always loved those.



# Workshops



## 15 Highlights and spit

As I've been working, I've thought about the final touches. Flying spit is one of my favourite things to depict. After adding it, I paint in highlights to the nose, ears, arms and teeth. I bump up the colours in the mouth and on the jacket using an Overlay Layer. I also drop in a couple of gleaming lights coming off the hair. Once that's all done, I can start looking at the little accessories.

## 16 Build the atmosphere

The background is too dark, so I use a Soft Round brush at 10 per cent opacity to add background fog. I bump up all the lights with Overlays, using the same brush. Now I go in and blend the background together, because it hasn't really felt like fog yet. I'm also starting to get the motion from the thumbnail back.



## 17 The little things

I add various pins and studs to his denim jacket, along with a sew-on patch for an imaginary band. This adds to the character and also gives me a chance to drop some of my own personality into the image. I find that this attracts people to my images – the more of yourself you can add the better. After that, I paint in the red gleam behind the glasses. I really want to pull the viewer to that focal point, so it's good to have high saturation amid dark and dull surfaces.



## 18 Tattoo and texture

I find a fabric texture online, bring it into my image and set the layer to Soft Light. I turn down the layer opacity and erase the areas around the jacket. The arm looks a bit bare, so I use a Multiply layer and add what could either be skin marking or a tiger stripe tattoo.

## PRO SECRETS

### Keeping it real

When I'm doing a portrait of a character, I refer to my plaster cast of a man's head and shoulders. I'll use a lamp to achieve the right lighting, too. Assisting my imagination like this helps sell the reality.

## ON THE DVD

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

### PHOTOSHOP

### CUSTOM BRUSH: JAIME JONES

A texture brush that I often use is this Jaime Jones brush, which does great gritty textures.



## 19 Radial Blur, Sharpen and I'm done!

Now that the image is done, I need to bring back the impact of the thumbnail using a Radial Blur. I flatten the image and duplicate the final. Then I go into Radial Blur (using the Zoom option) and adjust the blur amount. Once it looks pretty intense, I go in with a Soft Round Eraser and rub out the focal area. Then I flatten the image and use the Unsharp Mask filter to sharpen it.

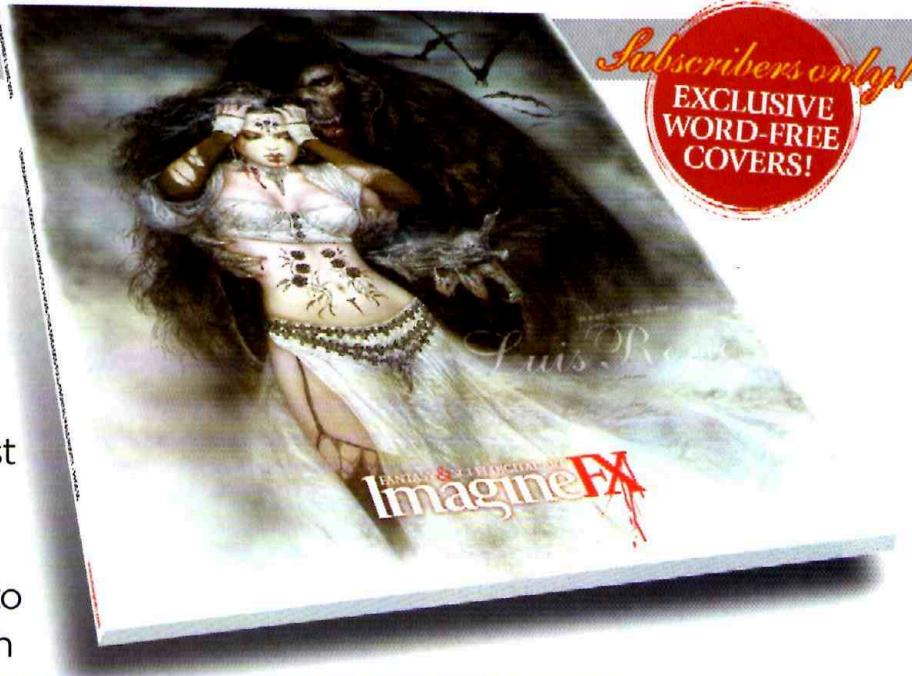
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Photoshop

PART ONE OF FOUR

# PRODUCTION DESIGN FOR GAMES

## LEAD CHARACTER

**Christian Bravery** takes you through his thought process and concept designs for a prospective video game, starting with the hero

### Artist PROFILE

#### Christian Bravery

COUNTRY: England



Christian runs Leading Light, an art and design agency that provides character and environment concepts for the video game and entertainment industries. [www.leadinglightdesign.com](http://www.leadinglightdesign.com)

#### DVD Assets

The files you need are on your DVD in the Christian Bravery folder in Workshops. Also included are his Wasp-copter workshop files, which we featured in issue 40.

There's so much talk and hyperbole about the term 'concept art' that the phrase has almost become meaningless. Here, in a four-part special I'll try to unravel the mysteries of concept art for budding artists.

Actually, make that four and a bit parts. Back in issue 40 I designed a futuristic vehicle called the wasp-copter (it's in my workshop folder on the DVD). In this instalment I'll be designing the wasp-copter pilot, who's also the hero character in our production. As such, he's an important one to get right.

I'll be following a fictitious brief that suits the purpose of this workshop series, which also mirrors the kind of commercial brief that the Leading Light team regularly works to. This means that I can give you an insight into the various stages of production design for video games, rather than simply churn out a piece of nice-looking art that lacks context – the big picture, if you like.

Once the team gets a brief, the first task is to design and visualise all the key story elements. I'll be expanding on these over the next four issues, and so you can look forward to seeing the main character who's a pilot; a village and its tropical island archipelago location; and the

enemy – weird, giant insects that attack the village. The final task is to create a key moment production illustration that draws all these elements together, depicting the battle between our hero and the invaders.

There are many great workshops each month in *ImagineFX*, and most of them cover the specifics of painting and finishing techniques. Rather than go over old ground I want to provide an insight into my thought processes and some of the preparatory techniques that I use



when approaching a character design. So, let's get started!

### Bring on the brief

This production design brief was created for a near-future sci-fi action adventure video game. Part of the story takes the player to a sleepy, backwater island archipelago in the tropics. The scene starts in a small fishing village where our hero is enjoying a spot of R&R. Suddenly the village is beset by strange happenings that culminate in an invasion of weird giant insects that are hell-bent on devouring the villagers. Our hero is pressed into service to save the day. Pictured opposite is the initial brief from the client...

**PROJECT: LEVIATHAN**

**BRIEF**

- Our hero is called Nate McCready.
- He's a military pilot on R&R from combat duties.
- He's in his mid- to late 20s.
- He's tall and handsome with a strong, but somewhat wiry frame, and has stylish dark hair.
- His costume is a flying suit.

## IS IT ENOUGH?

If we're going to capture the essence of the hero, we're going to need more details

This is a typical character brief, but where possible I ask the client to tell me more about the character, their background and personality, what motivates them and their role in the story. Sometimes this information comes easily, but occasionally my requests make the clients realise these are questions that they also need to find the answers to.

There's a huge difference between a character design and a costume design. For example, everyone knows that Conan wears a loin cloth and carries a sword, but if you put that outfit on Woody Allen, he's not going to convince you that he's an invincible barbarian. So, character design is about describing the person, their demeanour, life style and the role they play in the game, book or film. It's not just about what they're wearing. So after the client has expanded on its initial brief, we can add the following information:

Nate is a military pilot who has come to the archipelago on R&R.

He's seen and done a lot in combat that he'd like to forget and he's here to do just that. The last thing he wants is more action and excitement, but as events unfold he realises that it's up to him to save the day.

Nate's persona sits on the cusp between youthful cockiness and the dawning cynicism of early middle age. He's the reluctant hero, perhaps even an anti-hero.

It's important for the character design to exemplify not only his costume design and general look, but also his inner character.

Nate's flight suit will be explored in the early stages of the design process. The look of the suit will be determined by its practical role, but should be personalised to reflect his character and demeanour.

# Workshop



## 1 Creating the character

I set about collecting images of existing flying suits, from World War One examples through to space suits. Always avoid referencing existing entertainment industry designs or imagery, otherwise you'll quickly end up with a copy of a copy of a copy, which is plain

wrong. Once I have my references I create a set of colour thumbnails with the aim of finalising the costume design and colour scheme as early as possible. Here I've taken inspiration from various eras and used my reference materials as well as my imagination to help me come up with a good selection of options.



## 2 The benefits of real-world poses

After selecting a shortlist I enlist my right-hand man Matt Allsopp for modelling duties. For tasks that require realistic proportions I use photos to capture character poses. This isn't always applicable, but in this instance I find that photographing someone captures the subtleties of character. The danger of drawing from memory results in the repetition of preferred poses and a less-realistic, more stylised finished piece.



## 3 Capture some action photos

I use a Canon 50D and shoot in sport mode. I like to keep the model moving, directing him as we work while keeping the camera rolling. The shots I get have the movement and life that most posed shots lack – it's really useful for capturing action shots if the model can move freely. I can achieve the kinds of shots that are impossible for a model to hold for a picture, such as jumping through the air, running and so on.

## 4 Finalise in pencil

I import the best photos into Photoshop. Sometimes I work directly onto these, but in this case I want to do a further stage of drawing before I commit to a pose and costume design. So I start drawing in pencil, using my studio photos as reference for the poses and my research images as

detail references for the flight suit. I do three drawings, taking different elements from the references, mixing them with my ideas but staying focused on invoking the demeanour of the character and incorporating them into each design. I select one design and scan it in. This is the one that I'll work up as a final image.

## 5 Commit to a colour scheme

I now have all the elements that I need to finish the painting. Next comes the underpainting. This is based on my earlier colour thumbnails and provides the groundwork and colour plan for the detailed painting to come. For this stage I open the drawing in Photoshop, add a new clean layer, and lay in some quick greyscale shading as a Multiply layer. Then I add

a second layer, set to Colour Burn and quickly add some colour. At this point I just can't resist putting down some alternative colour schemes before committing to one. With this method of working the shaded greyscale layer works hand in hand with the Colour Burn layer and offers a speedy way to lay in what amounts to my underpainting for the piece, but it's also another great way of quickly trying out colour options.



## 6 Make your character memorable

A great art director once said to me that a good character design is one that an eight year old can draw after seeing it only once. It's not always applicable, but it's a great adage to bear in mind. It'll help you differentiate your designs from the plethora of others out there. Here I wanted to use the archetypal white scarf worn by World War One pilots as a motif for two reasons. First, it harks back to those bygone days of early flight, which evokes feelings of heroic bravery. Second, by simply changing the signature colour of the scarf from the typical white to red marks him out as a unique character who's clearly a pilot.

## 7 Render the finish

With the detailed design and the colour plan in place it's a question of working into each element to render the type of required finish. When painting each material that makes up the character I spend time thinking about the texture, environment and local colour, and the lighting and shaded areas.

## 8 Snapshot of a hero character

I'd like to wrap up this instalment by commenting on the pose and attitude of Nate McCready, the game's hero. I've tried hard to evoke the persona of a troubled spirit. Hopefully any observer can quickly tell that he's a brave man with a dark past. Here I've pictured him gazing off into the near distance – he's clearly thoughtful and somewhat melancholy, but his stance is strong, he's a man for the moment, someone to rise to a challenge. He's more than simply a costume design – he's a fully formed character!



### COMING UP IN NEXT ISSUE'S WORKSHOP...

Christian focuses on the game's environment: an alien island archipelago. If you'd like to flex your concept art muscles, read the official brief below and paint your vision of the tropical setting. Then post your images on the ImagineFX forum so that we can all see how close you came to Christian's version of the island paradise!

#### BRIEF 2 - The environment

The action takes place in and around a village situated on a tropical island archipelago. The setting is far in Earth's future, or perhaps on an alien planet so you can go pretty wild. Try to come up with something new – a fresh take on the typical tropical paradise image, but with recognisable roots in that archetype. Just remember that this is a real physical and natural place, and it needs to feel viable and believable.

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US AND CANADIAN READERS: PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 89...

Next month in...  
FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

# ImagineFX

**Legend! Ken Kelly**

From illustrating Conan to  
KISS, Frank Frazetta's  
protégé shares the story of  
his artistic journey.

There can only be one... August issue!

**Prince of Persia**

Capture the essence of  
Arabian nights – the prince,  
backdrops and rich fabrics.

**Bobby returns!**

Bobby Chiu reveals how  
he creates creatures for  
film production.

**Art of Blizzard!**

An exclusive chat with the  
talented artists behind Blizzard's  
StarCraft video game.

ISSUE 59 ON SALE TUESDAY 29 JUNE



Photoshop

# CAPTURE THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT

Learn about the techniques that will enable you to evoke the atmosphere and mood of a fantasy illustration. **Daarken** is your expert guide...

**Artist PROFILE**

**Daarken**  
COUNTRY: US



Daarken is a concept and freelance artist who's worked in the fantasy and games industry since 2004. His clients include Blizzard, Wizards of the Coast, Fantasy Flight Games and BioWare Mythic. [www.daarken.com](http://www.daarken.com)

**DVD Assets**  
The files you need are on your DVD in the Daarken folder in the Workshops section.

**A**s with any other illustration, it helps to have a solid idea beforehand. When you're working professionally, the last thing you want to do is spend a lot of time in the final painting trying to figure out what to do. All of your planning and design process should happen during your sketch phase – the final painting is just about refining the details.

I have the bad habit of jumping into an illustration without any planning, so I end up doing all of my planning while I'm doing the painting. Because I work this way I end up spending a lot of time rethinking my ideas, altering my composition, changing my designs and basically just wasting a lot of time. After starting and scrapping four illustrations, I ended up going back to the first idea that

I had. I think one of the reasons I don't do a lot of brainstorming in the beginning is because I tend to always go back to my original idea.

I decided to take the classic theme of David and Goliath and give it a fantasy twist. Even though I'm going to be working on a fantasy illustration, you can still create a realistic and believable image through mood, lighting and atmosphere.



**ON THE DVD**

**WORKSHOP BRUSHES**

**PHOTOSHOP**

**CUSTOM BRUSH: MY BROOSH**

This round brush is my main brush, and I use it to paint most of my illustration. It has opacity set to pen pressure and enables me to have a variety of edges.

## 1 White to grey

I always start an illustration by toning the canvas. It is a lot easier to judge your values on a neutral background as opposed to painting on a white canvas. After I pick a neutral grey I just hold down Alt and hit Backspace. This floods the entire canvas with the foreground colour. Once I have the canvas toned I start painting in abstract shapes with a large texture brush. I'm not really paying attention to the values or shapes I'm putting down – I just want to get something down on the canvas that I can paint on top of.

## 2 Blocking in

I can now begin blocking in the figures and the composition. At this stage I'm not worried about details or design. My main focus is on the composition of the illustration. I always start my illustrations in black and white, because I usually don't have a specific colour scheme in mind when starting an illustration. The other reason I start in black and white is because I can focus on my values. Having strong values in an illustration is important. If you have your values correct then the colour scheme doesn't matter.

## 3 Defining values

I like to establish a bright background behind the main character: it can give the illustration a lot of depth. If you look at landscapes you'll notice that as distance increases, contrast and saturation decreases. This technique is known as atmospheric perspective. Objects closer to the viewer will tend to be darker. Having these different planes of values will help inject depth in your painting. You can break it down into three simple planes: the foreground, middle ground and background. Try and keep a specific value range for each plane.

In depth The heat of the moment



# Workshops

## 4 Refining the image

There are a few things to keep in mind that can help create a more dynamic composition. The first trick is to tilt the camera, which creates a more dynamic mood. There's also the rule of thirds: break your image into thirds and place your focal point where the lines intersect. How about introducing diagonals? Here I have the antagonist's body going in one direction while looking in the opposite direction back towards the protagonist. Those two opposing angles will introduce movement to your painting. Try not to repeat shapes too often or have them all going in the same direction, though.

The bottom-left corner has a little too much negative space, so I fill the area with the protagonist's cape. I know I want to have something in the super foreground to push the depth and to create eye movement. I angle it so that your eye travels up the object and then meets the antagonist's left arm. This is angled in the opposite direction, bringing your eye back around to his head. The red arrows show the eye's movement in a circular composition. The blue arrows show directional elements that lead the eye back to the main focal point. Having loaded edges also helps create a more interesting composition. Loaded edges are when you have objects that crop off the sides, top or bottom of your illustration.



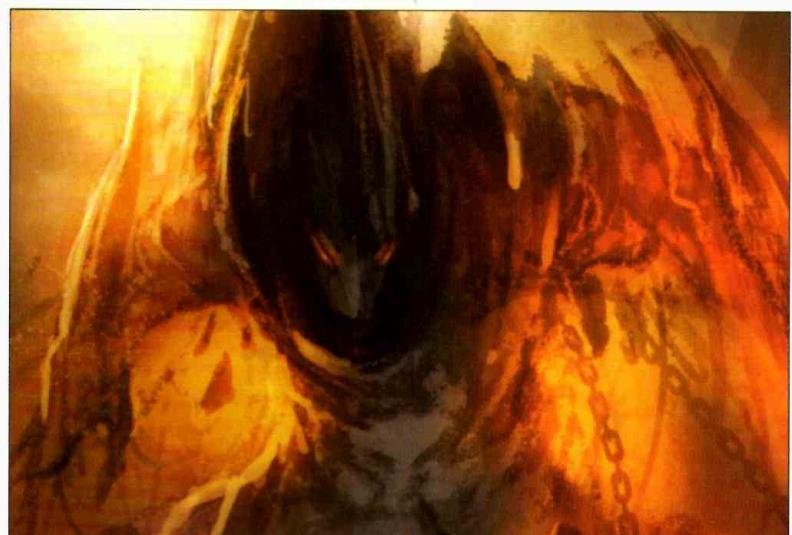
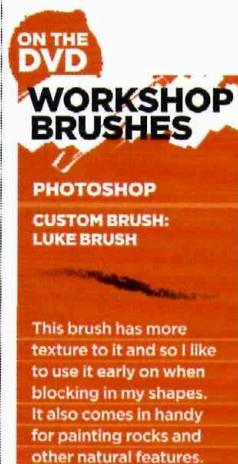
## 5 Adding colour

Typically, I use a variety of different layer types to add colour. After I get a base colour down, I create a new layer and paint opaque on top of that. To avoid changing my values too much when adding colour, I decided to start off by using a Color layer. But the problem with colour layers is that you can't achieve very dark or light values, so you have to go back in and fix that. I need my image to be darker, so I add a Multiply layer underneath the Color layer. A Multiply layer won't add lights either, so to make my image brighter I add an Overlay layer above the Color layer, enabling me to paint in more saturated lights.

**Shortcuts**  
**Copy merged**  
Cmd+Shift+C (Mac)  
Ctrl+Shift+C (PC)  
To copy an item from several layers, select an area, press these keys then paste it.

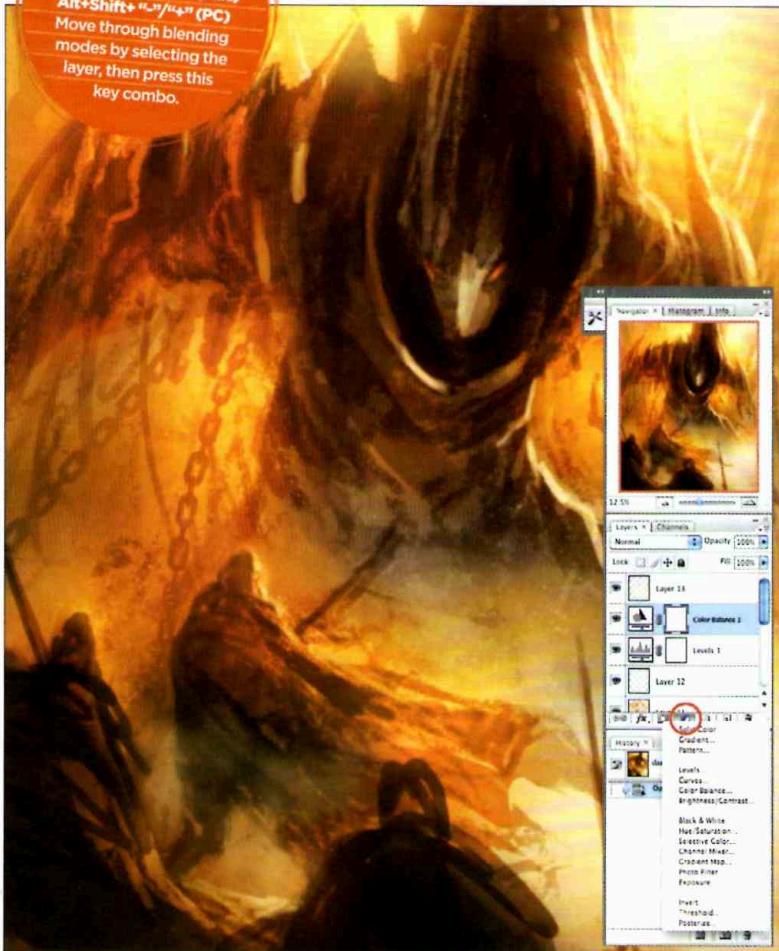
## 6 Adjustment layers

A quick way to adjust your colours is through the use of Adjustment layers. There are many types of Adjustment layers and the great thing about them is that they don't change your painting, so if you don't like the changes you can delete the Adjustment layer and you'll still have your original image. Using the Color balance adjustment layer is key to my process as an illustrator. Many times I'll start with a colour scheme, but by using Color balance I can come up with something that I normally wouldn't have planned on. It can also help bring harmony to your piece by adding the same colours across the entire canvas.



## Shortcuts

**Blending modes**  
 Opt+Shift+ $\leftarrow/\uparrow/\downarrow/\rightarrow$  (Mac)  
 Alt+Shift+ $\leftarrow/\uparrow/\downarrow/\rightarrow$  (PC)  
 Move through blending modes by selecting the layer, then press this key combo.



## 7 Fixing your drawing

As both a concept artist and an illustrator, I need to be as efficient as possible when I'm working. I don't want to spend a lot of time repainting or redrawing. Luckily, there are many tools in Photoshop that'll help you fix your painting without having to start over. One tool I use a lot is the Liquify tool (Filter>Liquify). This tool enables you to "push and pull" things around in your image, making it possible to make small changes easily without having to repaint anything. You can also use the Distort and Warp tool (Edit>Transform>Warp/Distort) to similar effect.

## 8 Painting armour

The antagonist is looking a little too sci-fi for me. I want the image to have a more fantasy feel to it, but then decide to make it more of a mixture between sci-fi and fantasy instead of trying to redesign anything. I go with more curvy armour and a few hints of hoses and tubes to achieve the look. It may sound obvious, but the main thing to remember when painting armour is that it's a hard surface that reflects things around it. Use high contrast with strong highlights when painting armour. Armour can also pick up surrounding light and colours – add little details like that to sell the illusion that you're painting metal.



**ON THE DVD**

## WORKSHOP BRUSHES

**PHOTOSHOP**  
**CUSTOM BRUSH: CLOUDER V**

This brush is mainly used for painting clouds, hence the name Clouder. I also use it to paint plumes of smoke. In this painting I use it to paint the smoke from the fire.

## 9 Smoke, dust and fire

I have the idea to make part of his arm fiery, just to add some visual interest and to show you my technique for painting fire. I start out by creating a group. With the group selected, I set the blending mode to Screen, add a new layer and fill the entire layer with solid black. I make another layer above that one and leave it blank for now. Now I click the Adjustment layer icon and create a gradient map. My gradient map goes from solid black to orange and then to yellow. I click OK, go back to that second blank layer and paint on that layer using solid white. This will paint in my "fire" effects. A few custom brushes here and there, and I have a down and dirty version of fire.



## 10 Know when to stop

Starting an illustration is easy, but knowing how to bring the illustration to a final stage is more difficult. Learning the fundamentals of illustration can help you determine how you'll "know." If you can look at your illustration and feel that you've created a good composition, the colours look good, parts are rendered to your satisfaction and the focal points are clear, then you're probably ready to call the painting finished. When you think the painting is finished, walk away from it and come back the next day. You'll probably notice something that needs to be fixed or changed.

Elevate your art to the next level!



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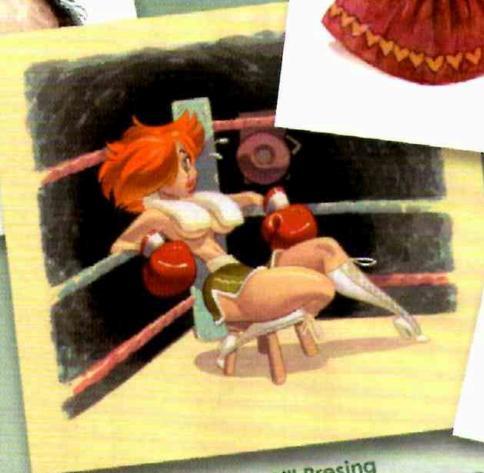
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# FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX Reviews



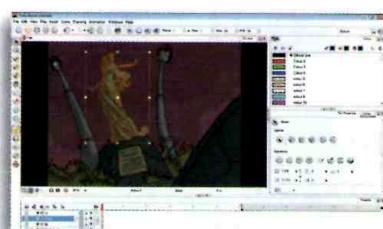
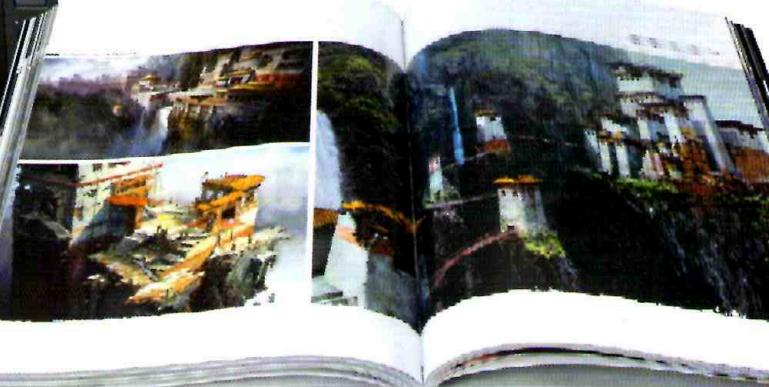
## Artist's Choice Award

Software and hardware with a five-star rating receives the IFX Artist's Choice award!

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team...



14  
PRODUCTS  
ON TEST



### HARDWARE

#### 102 Cintiq 21UX

Can it justify the high price tag?

### SOFTWARE

#### 104 Animate 2

What's new in this update?

#### 104 Mystical Tint Tone Color 2.0

Experiment with toning effects.

#### 105 Filter Forge 2.0

Create custom filters and textures.

#### 105 Colors!

Portable painting on your iPhone.



### BOOKS

#### 107 New reads

The Art of Uncharted 2; The Complete Shonen Art Kit; Comic Art Propaganda.



### ANIME

#### 109 New animation

The Sky Crawlers; Paranoia Agent: The Complete Collection; The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya.

### VIDEO GAMES

#### 110 New games

Sin & Punishment: Successor of the Skies; Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands; Lost Planet 2.



RATINGS EXPLAINED

Magnificent

Good

Ordinary

Poor

Atrocious

# Cintiq 21UX

MAC  
&  
PC

**TOP OF THE RANGE** The world's best touch screen creative device is given an update, but is it worth the significant outlay?

Price £1,700 Company Wacom Web [www.wacom.com](http://www.wacom.com) Contact Via website



The 21UX's dimensions measure 561x421x48mm, with a 432x324mm active pen area.

The Cintiq's built-in stand means you can set the display up to the angle that's most comfortable for you to work at.



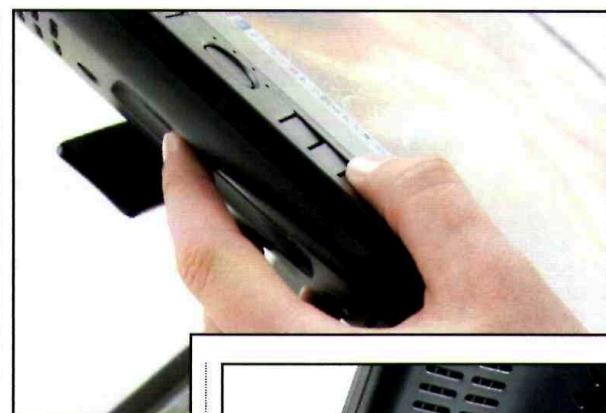
**W**acom's Cintiq series sits at the very peak of the tablet pile. And as you'd expect, it commands wince-inducing prices. The series is effectively a hybrid of traditional desktop monitor and tablet technology that, when remodelled and redeployed in November 2007, upped the stakes for digital painters and designers.

This - again-remodelled - Cintiq 21UX merges Wacom's leading digital pen technology with an on-screen drawing experience, but adds some of the bells and whistles that made the company's last Intuos update such a big success.

The first among these is the inclusion of Wacom's Intuos Grip Pen. In use, this is far more weighty and responsive to input than the previous Cintiq-bundled pen, and now requires a lower activation force, making strokes more fluid. This is coupled with improved pressure sensitivity on the tablet - doubling from 1,024 levels to 2,048.

The casing and design has been remodelled too. The 21UX remains a 21.3-inch display made of black plastic and glass, and offers a 431.8x323.9mm active pen area. This is more than large enough to work creatively on, with ample space for Painter or Photoshop palettes and interface elements, and a large central canvas area. There's also a new set of Touch Strips, which are cleverly rear-mounted to avoid accidental activation. They can be deployed to zoom, pan, and cycle through or resize brushes.

Sixteen ExpressKeys are front-mounted, each programmable for a shortcut. One of our favourite pre-programmed parameters was to clear the canvas space in



Two rear-mounted Touch Strips control up to four functions per application, including zooming, scrolling, brush size and canvas rotation.



Photoshop, which quickly enables you to view interface tools and settings, then swiftly hide them to get on with your painting.

In use, the Cintiq is responsive, comfortable and a genuinely exciting

**“In use, the Cintiq is responsive, comfortable and genuinely exciting”**

experience. However, we discovered two crucial drawbacks. The first is the monitor specification. While we fully accept that an OLED-driven monitor with superfast refresh rates and a brighter backlight would be unworkable with Wacom's electromagnetic resonance pen response, the fact remains that working on the Cintiq for long periods is difficult. Brightness levels pale in

comparison to a typical desktop monitor costing a sixth of the price, and contrast and colour reproduction suffers as a consequence.

This leads us on to our second issue with the Cintiq: the price. Of course, if money were no object then we'd heartily recommend it. But it is, and so we can't – especially when a vastly superior desktop monitor and Intuos4 combination costs around half of the Cintiq's asking price.

If you spend the majority of your day drawing digitally – and here we're talking about more than 90 per cent of your computer time – then the Cintiq could be for you. Or, if you're an artist who could cover the outlay in three or



## DETAILS

### Features

- 21.3-inch TFT active matrix LCD display
- 1,600x1,200 resolution
- 2,048 levels of pressure sensitivity
- 5,080 lines per inch resolution
- USB for pen input
- DVI or VGA for video input
- Tablet driver software
- 16 programmable ExpressKeys
- Two rear-mounted Touch Strips
- 180 degrees screen rotation, tilt angle from 10 to 65 degrees
- New Cintiq Grip Pen

### System Requirements

PC: Windows XP/Vista/7, DVI/VGA port  
Mac: OS X 10.4.8

### Rating



Whatever orientation you like to paint at, the Cintiq can be rotated to suit your needs.

The new Cintiq Grip Pen has programmablelide switches that enable you to save your most common actions into the pen itself.

Sixteen programmable Expresskeys provide quick access to modifier keys, keyboard shortcuts and pop-up menus.



A native resolution of just 1,600x1,200 pixels is poor compared to mainstream monitors, while brightness levels are also lacking.

The Cintiq has 2,048 levels of pressure sensitivity, and now enables you to select tools by changing how hard you press the pen tip on the screen.

## ARTIST INTERVIEW

### PAUL TYSALL

ImagineFX's art supremo appraises the Cintiq's creative clout

#### How does drawing compare to the Intuos 4?

You're back in the world of the slippery surface. Gone is the Intuos 4's tactile one, so it felt a bit of a step backwards. I looked for the rubber tip nib to help compensate, but Wacom hasn't supplied one. My guess is that this is because the rubber leaves marks on the surface.

#### How effective are the Touch Strips and ExpressKeys?

The Touch Strips being placed directly under the ExpressKeys makes sense for accessibility. But I always rest my hand over the ExpressKeys and found myself inadvertently touching the strip.

#### How does the Cintiq compare to your Intuos and monitor set-up?

Running Photoshop CS4 on my MacBook Pro worked fine – my only real issue came about monitor sharing. It took a while for me to realise you needed to assign an ExpressKey to go between the MBP screen and the Cintiq. I also wanted to close the lid on my MBP so the Cintiq became my main screen, but it wasn't having any of it. I believe this needs a driver update, though.

#### Would you recommend the Cintiq over a monitor and Intuos combination?

The Cintiq is about compromise. You have to give up a degree of pixel clarity to get a more intuitive way of working. But that said, Wacom has taught us how to break the habit of looking where we draw. Think about the money involved, and that maybe a new monitor and Wacom Intuos 4 might be a more appropriate option.



IFX Art Editor Paul Tysall has been working with graphics tablets for longer than he cares to remember.

[bit.ly/9nF7RA](http://bit.ly/9nF7RA)

# Animate 2

MAC &amp; PC

**BOOM TIME** Toon Boom's flagship animating app flaunts its expertise, adding solid new features to an already impressive offering

**Price** \$599 (upgrade from \$299) **Company** Toon Boom **Web** [toonboom.com](http://toonboom.com) **Contact** [Via website](http://toonboom.com)

**W**hen we looked at Animate's debut back in issue 41, we found it was an excellent resource. It came packed with pro-oriented features and was capable of some serious creative clout without the head-scratching workflow of other animation packages. This update builds on these factors, while introducing a few new workflow elements that reinforce its prowess.

The promise for suites such as Animate is simple. Create using a vector-based drawing system; composite your project using pre-defined or editable animation effects; then deliver it to your audience.

Animate merges the power of Flash and Digital Pro with the ease-of-use of beginner apps such as Toon Boom Studio. So what's new in version two? Well, the main tweaks have been made to the content creation tools. You'll find a new function for distributing character parts to individual layers, which reduces creation time

considerably. Following on from this, new adjustment parameters enable you to tweak individual character parts in the most specific detail. There are some minor updates to text scaling – similar to Flash CS5's recent improvements – and the Kinematics tool has been given a healthy new set of features and powers.

Other than these and a few new output settings, Animate 2 is all about being faster, better and more stable. Colouring, animating, sound synchronising and rendering is now faster to implement, while its bread-and-butter vector, hierarchy-based rigging, forward and inverse kinematics and advanced lip-syncing features match those in Flash CS5. Even its 3D handling of multi-plane cameras is super stable.

Overall, Animate 2 is a solid, effective update. Those who already have Animate will benefit from its new features and stability, while new users or Toon Boom Studio graduates will find it easy to get to grips with.

## DETAILS

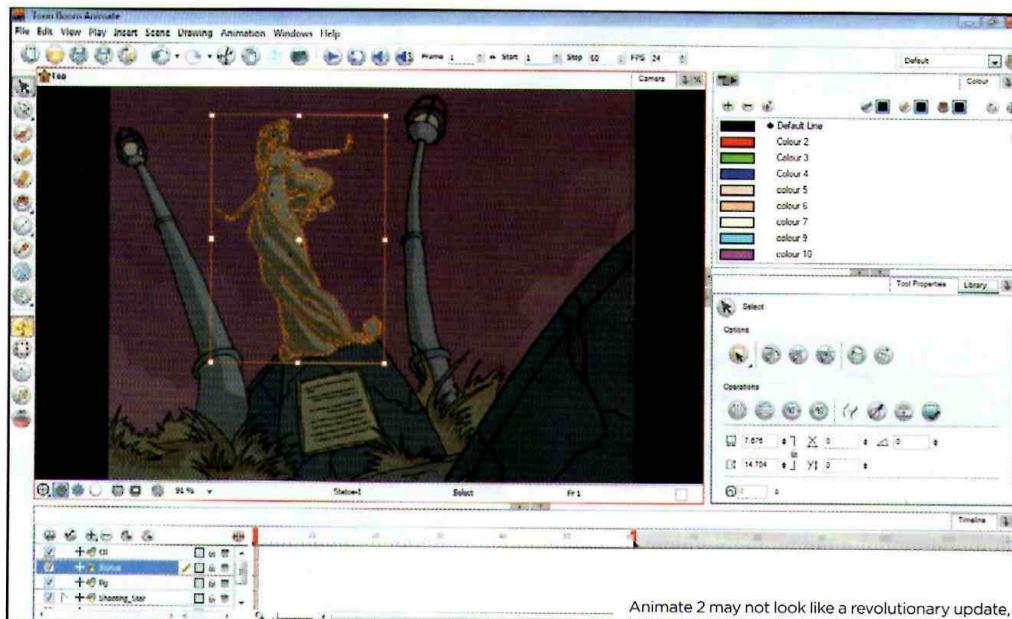
### Features

- Full drawing, animating and rendering suite
- Smooth character motion
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- Advanced morphing
- Flexible rigging and hierarchy options
- Reusable library structure
- Automated lip-sync
- Improved Colour
- Tone controls
- True space Z axis camera
- Improved Smart Puppet tool

### System Requirements

PC: Windows XP/Vista/7 (32 and 64-bit), 2GHz Intel Pentium Dual Core processor, 1GB RAM (2GB recommended)  
Mac: OS X 10.5/10.6 2GHz Intel Core Duo processor

### Rating



Animate 2 may not look like a revolutionary update, but its improvements are welcome and effective.

Mystical Tint Tone Color's effects can be achieved from within Photoshop itself.



MAC &amp; PC

## Mystical Tint Tone Color 2.0

**QUICK FIX** Correct your images with presets you can tweak to your taste

**Price** \$249 (upgrade \$129)

**Company** Auto FX  
**Web** [www.autofx.com](http://www.autofx.com)  
**Contact** [Via website](http://www.autofx.com)

### RATING



Mystical Tint Tone Color 2.0 is a plug-in application that offers over 60 presets for quickly creating and applying toning and contrast effects. It can be launched from within Photoshop, or as a standalone application, and while it sits well in Photoshop, the standalone application looks, on first inspection, a tad clunky.

Within its interface is a simple set of preset effects, ranging from Antique Photo to standard Sepia. Once you select a preset, sliders and editable parameters enable you to experiment with shading and tone non-destructively.

Each preset is applied to a separate layer, so you can re-order and turn options on and off, while quick brushes and tool options are available for fast fixes.

The results can be effective, but take a bit of work. What's more, from within Photoshop, it runs very slowly, which for an experimental filter app makes its preview features largely redundant.

It's easy to use, however, and with saveable presets, it offers something for digital artists who may need a quick-fire preset to punch up their work.

iPhone



Colors! started life on the Nintendo DS, and has a well-implemented interface and set of tools.

## Colors!

**MINI PAINT** The finger-drawing app promises more than it delivers

**Price** £3

**Company** Collecting Smiles

**Web** [colors.collectingsmiles.com](http://colors.collectingsmiles.com)

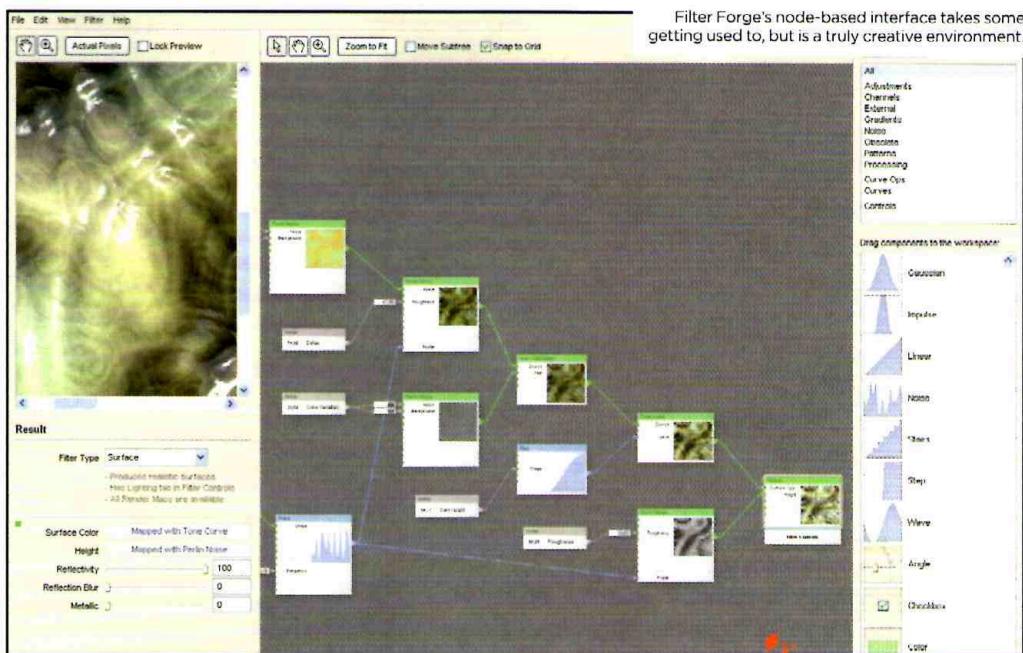
**Contact** Via website

**RATING**

Over the last year, we've been surprised by the growth of iPhone and iPod Touch painting apps. They range from the good (Layers) to the bad (see Photoshop Mobile) to the ugly (witness EasySketch). Colors! sits comfortably within this range, somewhere nearer good than bad. And it's not ugly, with a simple and clean interface that mirrors Layers.

Having originally found a home on the Nintendo DS, Colors! is well thought out, with four hard- or soft-edged, fully sizable, brushes, adjustable transparency levels and a simple-to-use colour wheel. It also features a clever setting that offsets the brush cursor, so your finger isn't in the way when you paint.

But no amount of features can disguise the fact that the app is slow and unresponsive. Strokes come a fraction of a second after you make the movement, and the undo and redo states seemingly take forever (and repeatedly crash the app). This is all a great shame, because Colors! has some strong tools and a simple, fun and easy way to painting on the iPhone, DS or iPod Touch. If only it weren't so slow, it would be closer to the good end of the scale.



Filter Forge's node-based interface takes some getting used to, but is a truly creative environment.

MAC & PC

## Filter Forge 2.0

**CONTROL CENTRE** Take more control of your Photoshop plug-ins with Filter Forge Professional and create and share your filters

**Price** \$399 **Company** Filter Forge **Web** [www.filterforge.com](http://www.filterforge.com) **Contact** Via website

**P**hotoshop's native effects filters can, at times, lack in impact and flexibility. Filter Forge has been around for some time, and this update is long overdue. It does what it says, offering a complete environment for producing home-grown filters and procedural textures.

It's available in three versions and can be implemented as a standalone application, or from within Photoshop's Effects menu. We looked at the Pro version, which compared to its cheaper siblings offers diffusion maps, multiple CPU support and handles images over 3,000x3,000 pixels.

Both the Basic and Standard versions are capable of HDRI lighting, smart anti-aliasing and include a Favourites menu of saved presets. However, only the Standard and Pro versions enable you to create and save your own effect filters. To achieve this, Filter Forge offers a node-based workflow. This works by connecting component parameters in a daisy chain to combine effects and functions.

Components include brightness and contrast, channels, gradients, noise, colour adjustments, distortions, patterns, curves, curve operations and image processing controls.

The process itself is relatively straightforward once you get used to the workflow. Each parameter node can be arranged on the canvas, positioned in the chain and linked to other component nodes. You can then feed in a bitmap image and experiment with parameter levels and the position of each component in the chain to see what effect is created. After a while, you become familiar with each component's settings, and can quickly knock together a bespoke filter.

Digital artists, animators, designers and texture creators will enjoy the ability to create seamless, resolution-independent textures and patterns. Furthermore, Filter Forge Pro offers a fast way of creating 3D elements or background scenery. Add the capability for creating bump and normal maps and you have a powerful and creative production tool.

### DETAILS

#### Features

- Node-based effects engine
- Online filter library
- Seamless tiling
- Bump and normal maps
- HDRI lighting effects
- Smart anti-aliasing
- Adaptive previews
- Multiple presets
- Randomiser settings

#### System Requirements

PC: Windows 2000 or later, Pentium III 733MHz or better, 128MB RAM  
Mac: OS X 10.4 and higher, G4, G5 or Intel CPU, 256MB RAM

#### Rating



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*Sterling Hundley*

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# The Art of Uncharted 2

**GAME ART** Ballistic showcases one of the most popular games of 2009 and kicks off a new Art of... series

**Editor** Daniel Wade **Publisher** Ballistic **Price** £51  
**Web** [www.ballisticpublishing.com](http://www.ballisticpublishing.com) **ISBN** 9781921002717 **Available** Now

**Y**ou won't be surprised to hear that games are the biggest selling form of entertainment out there, with Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 taking £242 million in its first 24 hours last November. What's new is the industry's awareness that there's an audience ready to pore over the art behind these multi-level, character-rich behemoths.

To make full use of this unique demographic, Ballistic Publishing has unveiled a new Art of the Game series. The books focus on the year's biggest game releases, and Ballistic has chosen Naughty Dog's Uncharted 2 as its first case study.

Luckily, in the gaming world, 'biggest' doesn't mean 'formulaic' or 'artistically moribund', as it often does in films. The book's structure makes this clear, with 180 of its 272 pages full of concept art, and a further 80 packed with production art and character modelling.



The tome begins with 2D character art, followed by a chapter on the 3D modelling of Nathan Drake and co – all accompanied by annotations from the artists. Such commentary is very welcome. It's something that's lacking in the majority of Art of... books, which tend to keep the artists in the background.

However, the meat of this book is the concept art. In a game that circumnavigates the globe and rediscovers forgotten cultures, there's plenty of room for inspired takes on ancient art. We're taken through each level and stage of the game, detailing the sweeping vistas and giant temples that make up the Uncharted world, then follow the steps that transfer

them into the final product.

If you're interested in the artistic process behind today's big game titles, or just fancy gawping at stunning digital art, this is an irresistible buy.

**RATING**

## Further reading...

Manga art for schoolboys and the subversive side of comic books

### The Complete Shonen Art Kit

**Editor** Yishan Studio

**Publisher** Ilex **Price** £15

**ISBN** 9781905814718 **Available** Now

**RATING**



If you'd like to know more about the action-packed side of Japanese comic art then this title is worth checking out. Shonen art translates as "boy manga" in Japan, and as such there are many characters and scenes aimed at that audience. We're taken through templates of competitive schoolboys, beautiful schoolgirls and wise old men with ninja skills – a flashback to every boy's childhood!

Although the book's simple design seems to be based on a phone directory, the quality and quantity of information provided within the book and accompanying CD makes it an impressive start point for manga beginners.

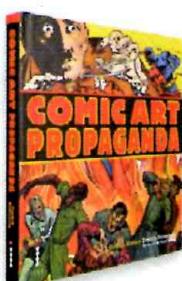
### Comic Art Propaganda

**Author** Fredrik Strömberg

**Publisher** Ilex **Price** £18

**ISBN** 9781905814701 **Available** Now

**RATING**



Don't read this book, warns Peter Kuper's foreword, because you'll find the most fiendish propaganda about religion, race, politics, sex and drugs – all in a medium specifically targeted at the youth! Yet studying the bigotry and bare-faced lies that have featured in comics can also be fascinating, and in this book, Fredrik Strömberg has compiled an important slice of comic history.

Whether it's questioning the incorruptibility of Peanuts or the notion that propaganda is a thing of the past, this study of the blatant, subtle, effective and downright insane ways the medium has attempted to warp brains is as entertaining as it is significant.

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Charisma-free leads Kusanagi and Kannami, failing to make the plot move faster by getting in a car.

# The Sky Crawlers

**THE CRAWLING STORY** Another film by Mamoru Oshii that's easier to admire than enjoy

**Distributor** Manga **Cert** 12 **Price** £20 (Blu-ray £25) **Available** Now

**G**host in the Shell director Mamoru Oshii has unashamedly stated in the past that his primary concern is with making films which he considers to be artistically valid. Presumably it's a bonus if the audiences can follow the plot. His latest film is rather more accessible than some of the other titles he has to his name, but The Sky Crawlers still asks too many questions and provides too few answers.

Set in an alternate, peaceful world, the story centres on a small squadron of fighter pilots tasked with engaging opposing squadrons in often deadly dogfights, which are televised for the purpose of entertaining civilians and preventing the outbreak of genuine war. The film follows the progress of Kannami, the newest pilot on the airfield and one of a mysterious, unaging group called Kildren. Kannami tries to uncover information about his predecessor,



while developing a relationship with aloof senior officer Kusanagi.

Oshii has been known for delivering incredible 3D CGI ever since Ghost in the Shell: Innocence, and The Sky Crawlers continues this trend. The scenery is often so well rendered it's almost photo-realistic, and the aerial scenes are nothing short of spectacular. The 2D character art, however, fails to match the 3D work. It makes watching the film a rather jarring experience, and even when you get used to the aesthetic style, its poor characterisation and weak plotting cause the whole thing to feel stiff and stilted. Arguably this is justifiable – the secret behind the Kildren is a

terrible one, and a cold, sterile tone is well-suited to such an overall downbeat film – but it doesn't translate into a movie that should be watched for the sake of entertainment.

**RATING**

## Also look at...

A violent anti-hero and a schoolgirl who escapes her humdrum existence

### Paranoia Agent: The Complete Collection

**Distributor** MVM

**Cert** 18

**Price** £30

**Available** Now

**RATING**



Paranoia Agent is one of the best crafted anime series of recent years. There are no new extras with this reissue of Satoshi Kon's mind-bending exploration of modern day

psychosis, but if you don't already have the full series you'd be well advised to take advantage of its re-release.

In Japan, word gets out that a teenage thug nicknamed Lil' Slugger is roaming the streets and bashing stressed people in the head. As the list of victims grows, rumours about Lil' Slugger spread and become ever more outlandish – but what's the root of this urban bogeyman? Intelligent and captivating, Paranoia Agent is a must-own, not only for anime enthusiasts but for any discerning fan of psychological thrillers.

### The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya

**Distributor** Beez

**Cert** 12

**Price** £25

**Available** Now

**RATING**



What made this series so interesting on its original Japanese broadcast was that the episodes aired in a non-chronological order. As such, the story unfolded in a haphazard fashion that, oddly, worked very well. The DVD releases restored the chronological order, but fortunately the series is likeable enough that it doesn't suffer too much for it.

Haruhi is an unusual schoolgirl, whose boredom leads her to actively seek out (and find) adventures with aliens, telepaths and time travellers, dragging her half-willing friends along for the ride. It's a lovely slice of gently surreal comedy, and if you look up the original broadcast order and watch it like that, it's also a wonderful example of innovative storytelling.



## Sin and Punishment Successor of the Skies

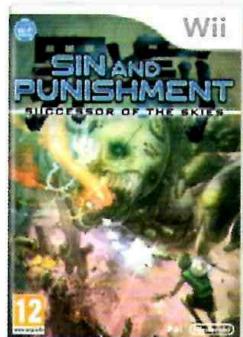
**HOT SHOTS** This imaginatively designed on-rails shooter puts the fun back into blowing stuff up

**Format** Wii **Publisher** Nintendo **Price** £40  
**Release date** Out now **Web** [www.nintendo.co.uk](http://www.nintendo.co.uk)

**T**his interstellar shoot 'em up is probably the most gloriously unhinged game on the Wii. It tethers you to a set path, only allowing you to move around the screen on a 2D plane as you blast your way through each of its manic levels.

Cult developer Treasure managed to convince former game designer and respected manga artist Suzuki Yasushi to come out of retirement for this sequel to 2000's on-rails shooter. Good job, too – his streaking laser arcs and delicate bullet swirls add graceful decoration to a journey that veers from volcanic wastelands to decimated city shells and headlong into hulking space cruisers.

It's enough to lull you into a false sense of tranquillity – to make you sit back and admire the wonderful backgrounds, animation and well-crafted characters – but pausing for so much as a millisecond will spell certain doom. Instead, you'll take in the view



while darting about, evading missiles and timing your counter-attacks against beautifully crafted enemies, including robots, eagles and exploding fish. Perhaps most impressive are the huge bosses that engulf the screen, with their attack patterns leaving barely a hair's width between you and an untimely death.

Having Suzuki Yasushi's name on the credits will no doubt garner the game a cult following, but behind his whimsical fantasy-meets-sci-fi style is a blast of good, old-fashioned gameplay that forces you to think tactically as you juggle shots, avoid bullet patterns and counter everything this game can

throw your way. Six hours is all it takes to complete, but it's a furiously hard, exhilarating ride that rewards determined players with some of the most lovingly crafted design we've seen on the Wii so far.

**RATING**

## Also look at...

A prince with a penchant for parkour, and big guns for giant bug hunts

### Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands

**Format** Xbox 360, PS3, Wii  
**Publisher** Ubisoft  
**Price** £50  
**Release date** Out now  
**RATING**

Jerry Bruckheimer is set to make the Persian prince the new Captain Sparrow this summer, although this game is actually a sequel to 2000's PS2 title, and has little in common with the new movie.

Described by animation director Jan-Erik Sjovall as what Sands of Time would have looked like if made for PS3, the game mixes the technology of Prince of Persia 2008 with Sands of Time's more realistic style. It plays like it looks too, with the original's acrobatics, linear narrative and arena style combat, combined with the ability to rewind time. Some new moves spice up the formula – notably the ability to command the elements, unleashing tornado attacks or freezing water to create new paths.

The link to the summer movie should boost sales, but ironically this return-to-roots revamp does just enough to warrant a release on its own merits.

### Lost Planet 2

**Format** Xbox 360, PS3  
**Publisher** Capcom  
**Price** £40  
**Release date** Out now  
**RATING**

Set 10 years after the events of the the original Lost Planet, this game swaps snow for jungle, but retains the giant creatures and anime-style mecha of its predecessor. Art director Takahiro Kawano's designs are impressive: the Vital Suits borrow heavily from real industry, having been modelled on actual forklifts and cars rather than towering Gundam robots. You'll need your mecha suits too, because Lost Planet 2 is full of kinetic firefights, including boss battles with some of Capcom's largest creatures to date. This is the definition of bigger and better. It's so big, in fact, that you occasionally have to fight the largest of its creatures from the inside out by venturing into the depths of their innards.

The game includes in a number of fun multiplayer modes too, including Team Elimination, Survival and Foxhunting matches where one or two players must battle to stave off attacks from everyone else. These additions ensure that Lost Planet's gameplay finally matches its impressive design.

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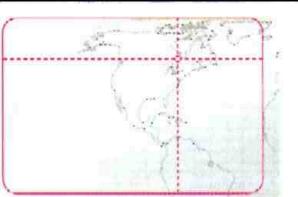
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Image by Lee Perry-English

# Studio profile



LOCATION Ontario, Canada RECENT PROJECT VENT WEB [www.udonentertainment.com](http://www.udonentertainment.com)

## UDON

**TEN YEARS LATER** It's a special birthday for the Canadian art studio that made western manga successful through a combination of hard work and passion



**U**DON has come a long way in 10 years. The company was set up by CEO Erik Ko as a loose-knit group of artists eager to strengthen their standing in the industry, by pooling their skills to take on larger projects. UDON has since evolved into a fully fledged publisher and vibrant creative services studio.

"Many small publishers last only a few years, so I think UDON making it to the 10-year mark is a testament to the quality and hard work of our artists and staff," says project manager and seven-year veteran Jim Zubkavich. "It's great to see strong artists grow into even better ones, and see newcomers push themselves to produce their best work."

The artists' time and commitment have paid off, with the likes of Warner Bros,

UDON now offers a wide range of art styles, although manga is still a particular strength.

Marvel, Blizzard and Hasbro lining up for its services. The studio now supplies high-end illustration and concept work for everything from toy packaging to comics.

"We started off with big fish from the get-go," says Jim as he reflects on UDON's first contract with Marvel, for a project that had gone off the rails. UDON was charged with putting it back on schedule and producing a slew of art under the gun. "It was a trial by fire, but it secured our reputation as hard workers who could deliver."

That success, plus a love of manga cultivated by founders Arnold Tsang and Omar Dogan, inspired UDON to approach Capcom about a comic based on Street Fighter. "The franchise was dormant and we blew the dust off it," says Jim.

UDON's first project for Capcom was a comic based on the Street Fighter video games.

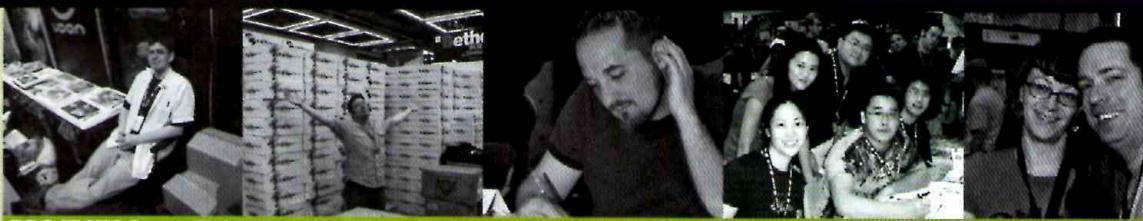


This Wererat was produced for the fourth edition of the Dungeons & Dragons Monster Manual.

## ARTIST INTERVIEW

**OMAR DOGAN**

UDON's longest serving artist reflects on 10 years of manga



**PROJECTS** Street Fighter comic, Darkstalkers comic, Silent Moebius manga, art books, video game art

**Have you always wanted to work on comics?**

Although I did make some comics in my free time, I never considered it as a career. I'm actually a trained 2D animator/layout artist by trade. Comics just happened along, and since some elements are similar to animation, I was able to mould myself into the position.

**What's the challenge for an artist at UDON?**

To be on time and produce high-quality art. To improve and keep up with important trends and styles in art, and the media we work in. To be professional in your approach.

**Have you always liked manga?**

Manga and anime appealed to me right away. The first anime I saw was Plastic Little by Satoshi Urushihara, and the first manga I read was Ranma 1/2 by Rumiko Takahashi. I watched anime back when all you could get were 'fan-subs' on poorly copied VHS tapes.

**Do you work on one project at a time or juggle assignments?**

I like to do one job at a time and do it right. Unfortunately, multi-tasking happens a lot.

**How flexible do you need to be to work for UDON?**

If you're professional, know your priorities and are serious about getting ahead then you can do well at UDON. You can have your fun, but work comes first.

**Do you have a preferred character or title to work on?**

I've always liked Ibuki and most of the Street Fighter series. Capcom's designs have been an inspiration to me for a long time.



Omar has been working with Erik Ko, CEO of UDON, since about a year prior to the company's creation in 1999.

[omar-dogan.deviantart.com](http://omar-dogan.deviantart.com)



The studio continues to offer high-quality comic artwork, done to spec.



"We were given the all clear to do as we pleased," adds editor Matt Moylan, "but we still took great care to stay true to the game's characters." Capcom Japan was impressed and ultimately took

**These days we can produce whatever style we need for ourselves or our clients**

UDON into its confidence. UDON now has multiple Capcom projects, including concept art projects for new video games and manga based on Final Fight, Darkstalkers and Matt's favourite, Mega Man. "If there was a competition for biggest rogues' gallery, I think Mega Man would win hands down," he says.

What started as a licensing deal became a friendship based on mutual respect, which has enabled UDON to grow steadily over the years. Many of the company's staff artists are fans

of Capcom legends such as Akiman, Shinkiro and Ikeno, and jumped at the chance to work alongside their heroes, "[They] suddenly turned into fanboys when they met some of their inspirations," quips Matt.

He says the biggest challenge with manga is getting localisation rights agreed. There are often four or five stakeholders in a title, including the original artist, the Japanese publisher and the North American licence holder. Then there's the matter of translation to consider – after all, a joke about ritual suicide in an original manga won't play too well with western parents.

Now that UDON has reached the 10-year mark, the company is expanding its portfolio and staff, and its art styles are becoming ever more diverse. "These days we can pretty much produce whatever style we need for ourselves or for our clients," says Matt. "Anything from lush fantasy paintings, cute children's illustrations to classic American comics."

New artist Jeffrey 'Chamba' Cruz



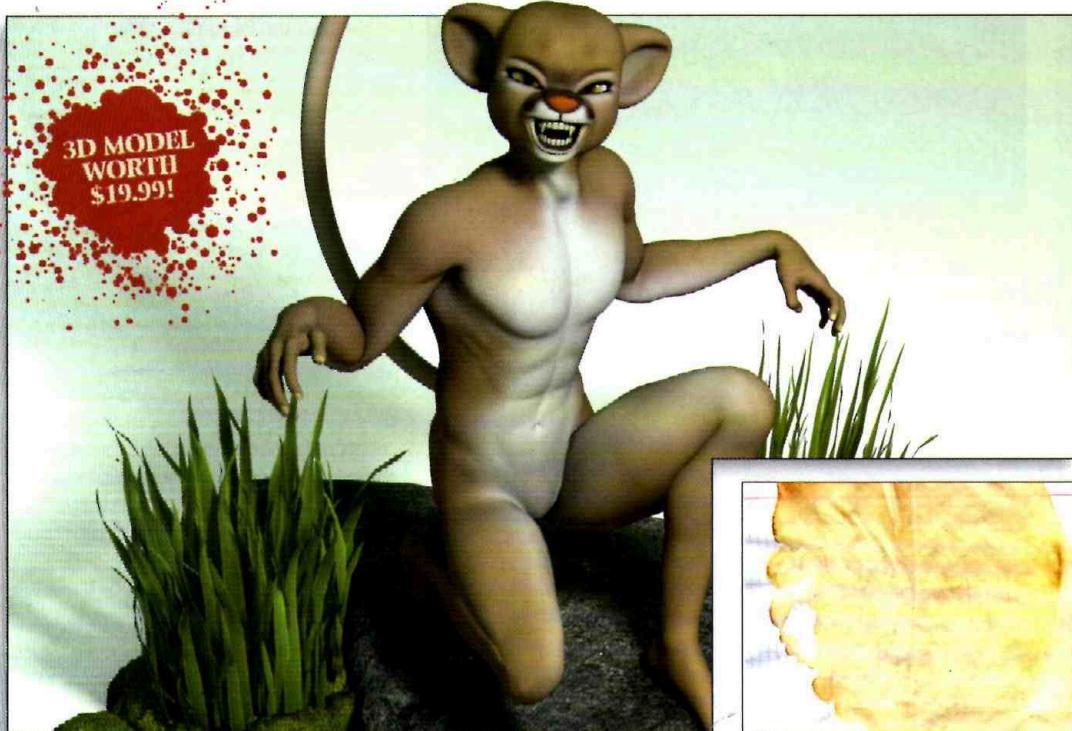
fits the mould perfectly, being both adaptable and passionate about comics and manga. "[I joined] because of the people, the type of work UDON deals with and licensed properties we dabble in," he says. UDON now creates DVD covers, card art and magazine illustrations alongside licensed comics and books. "It's a thrill to work on franchises I enjoyed growing up," Chamba adds.

UDON has moved beyond its house style, becoming a well-rounded studio. "I feel like we're on the cusp of creative breakthroughs," reveals Jim, "and the confidence of doing so well for so long has made us a bit bolder and more capable." Looking to the future, Jim sees more licensed manga, books, Capcom comics and conceptual work, and there's even the promise of some home-grown UDON intellectual properties. "If we can do that," he says, "the next decade will fly by."

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## FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART **ImagineFX**

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FIND MORE Q&A ON PAGE 38

## Experts answer your questions

Go out with a bang Make your fireworks look real with Cynthia Sheppard's help

Legs eleven Davi Blight reveals his tips for drawing multi-limbed creatures

## WORKSHOP FILES



### 68 Get under the skin of manga

- WIP files • Brushes



### 74 Paint a dynamic manga character

- WIP files • Final image



### 76 Learn the secrets of Japanese art

- WIP files • Brushes • Final image • Video



### 80 Make the unusual look natural

- WIP files • ArtRage files • Photos
- Final image • Video



### 84 Paint a monster

- WIP files • Brushes
- Final image • Video



### 90 Production design for games

- Reference photos • WIP files
- Final image

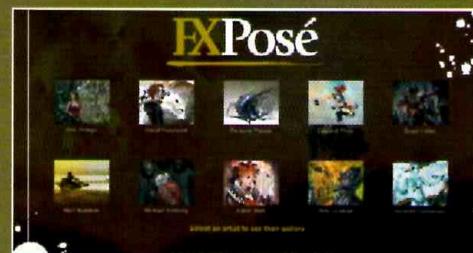


### 96 Capture the heat of the moment

- WIP files • Brushes • Final image • Video

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